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6

INSIDE THE CUBAN REVOLUTION

ADOLFO GILLY

Special 96-page issue

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INSIDE THE CUBAN REVOLUTION

ADOLFO GILLY

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NOTES FROM THE EDITORS

Our original intention was to publish "Inside The Cuban Revolution" as the special July-August issue this past summer. For a variety of reasons which any editor would understand but which would be of no particular interest to anyone else, this proved impossible. Fortunately, Philip Reno's short book "The Ordeal of British Guiana" was about ready to go to press, and we were glad of the opportunity to give it the additional circulation which publication as an issue of the magazine implied. The translation of Adolfo Gilly's manuscript was completed soon after the July-August issue went to press, however, and this left us with a choice. We could either bring it out simply as a short book, as we had originally intended doing with "The Ordeal of British Guiana," or we could publish it as a book and at the same time as a second special oversized issue of the magazine. In view of our long-standing policy of keeping MR readers thoroughly informed about the course and prospects of the Cuban Revolution, we finally decided on the latter course. The price—editorially, not in dollars—was to omit from this month's MR both the Review of the Month and Scott Nearing's World Events. We regret these omissions but believe that the importance of "Inside the Cuban Revolution" more than justifies them.

Adolfo Gilly is a left-wing Argentine journalist who lived "inside the Cuban Revolution" for a year, which is a long time on the scale relevant to the measurement of revolutionary events. He got a chance to learn the thoughts and demands of rank-and-file Cuban revolutionaries. This work is essentially a report on these thoughts and demands and how they do and do not get reflected in the policies of the leaders and in the actual

(*continued on inside back cover*)

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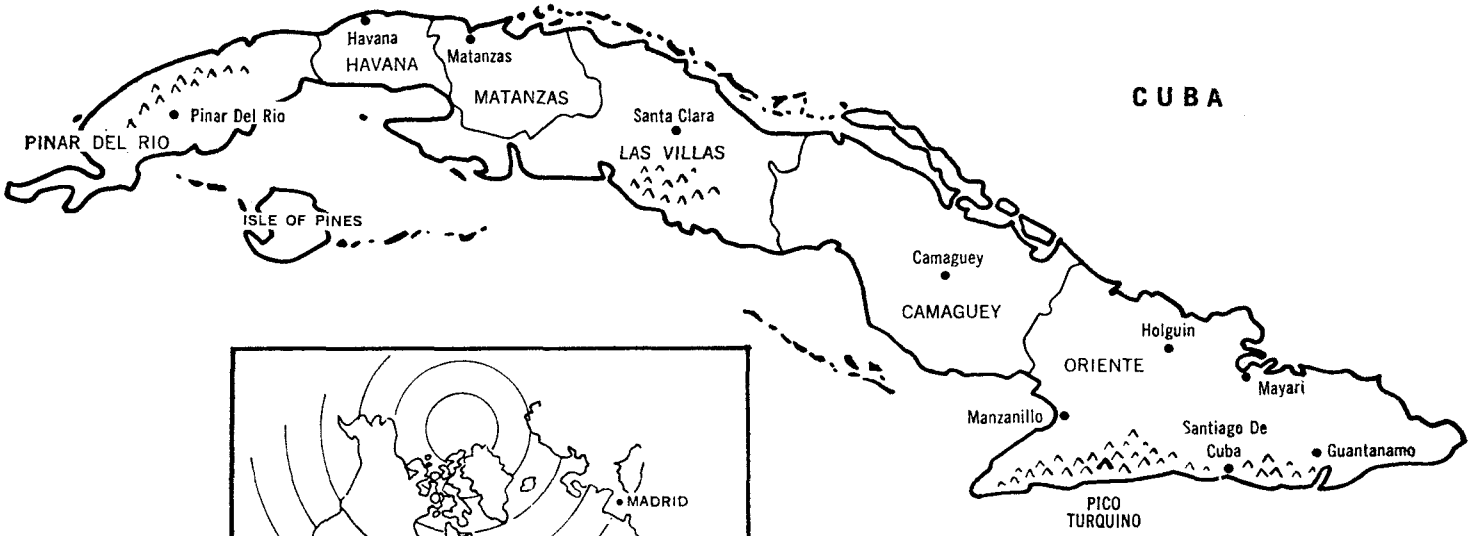

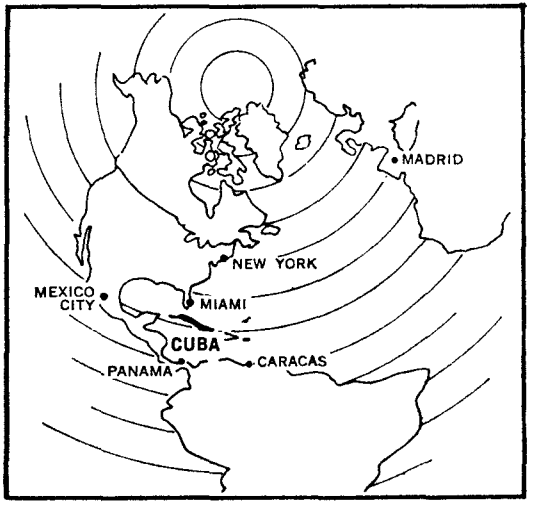

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INSIDE THE CUBAN REVOLUTION

Adolfo Gilly

translated from the Spanish

by

FELIX GUTIERREZ

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Foreword

This is a work of reportage. It does not try to be more than a quick, journalistic glance at the internal situation in Cuba and at the most important forces at work in the Revolution. My observations and conclusions are based on more than a year of living with the Cuban people during 1962 and 1963, the crucial period of the Cuban Revolution, and on reading the principal works and documents which appeared at that time. I deal only with some of the problems which carry over into the present stage of the Revolution and which will continue to exercise influence during the future unfolding of the Cuban Revolution, on both national and international planes. These problems arise from below, from the very structure of the Revolution; and they will exert their pressure whatever policies the revolutionary government may adopt.

This work is, and is intended to be, different from most of what is being currently published on Cuba. It is unconditionally on the side of the Revolution but has nothing in common with those touristic visions which are full of sugary, empty idealizations of a revolutionary process as rich and contradictory as life itself.

We no longer need reports which concentrate on the difference between the present and the capitalist past, following the formula of "before and after." The whole world knows all that, and the Revolution long ago won its right to exist. Of interest today is what is happening inside the Cuban Revolution: the roads along which it advances, the domestic and foreign obstacles it meets, the possibilities which exist and the forces and methods to achieve them. It is not important to write a simple eulogy but to bring up the problems of the Revolution, to display its experiences, and to point out the real forms of its inner life—politically, economically, and socially.

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Since the introduction to the first chapter was written, the struggle of the trends which are to be found at the Revolution's center has continued and intensified to the same extent as the Sino-Soviet dispute and the world revolutionary movement.*

All Cuba's problems are not discussed here. Omitted, for example, are the vital and decisive question of the party (or parties) in the Revolution, the situation in education, the controversies about art. But all these questions—and others—are subordinate, even though important, to the broad lines sketched out here of the struggle between revolution and coexistence, equality and privilege, workers' democracy and bureaucracy, revolution and counter-revolution.

The questions raised in this work are among the central ones of this struggle and will be decisive throughout the present stage of the Revolution.

Adolfo Gilly

July, 1964

* The first chapter was originally written in October, 1963, as a series of articles for the Uruguayan weekly *Marcha,* and is published here unchanged.—Translator.

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CHAPTER 1

The Cuban Revolution Is Five Years Old

Enormous forces are stirring inside the Cuban Revolution. During this whole year [1963], under tightening pressure, a leap has taken place which was in part stimulated, and in part limited, by the turns of the Sino-Soviet dispute. The factors in this change are both national and international. Its ultimate source must be sought in the gigantic transformation which the revolutionary forces and movements are undergoing in the whole world during these years, and in the growing strength of the Cuban people who, far from feeling intimidated, are inflamed by continued foreign provocations and aggressions. Although to the superficial observer Cuba's internal development appears uniform, rectilinear, and unbroken, these profound processes are reflected in one way or another in the leadership of the Revolution, the team around Fidel Castro, its policies, actions, and recent stands. They will be reflected much more directly, in the not too distant future, in new measures and initiatives which are sure to arise in revolutionary Cuba. In this work, we shall try to lay bare the domestic and international forces which are determining both the immediate problems of the Revolution and its future course of development.

INDUSTRY OR AGRICULTURE?

"Industry is the moving force of development and agriculture its base," say the Chinese. But is it necessary to give priority to agriculture to gain the means for developing industry, or to industry to push the development of a modern and productive agriculture? This is one of the many dilemmas being raised in Cuba now, dilemmas in both domestic and international policies. These dilemmas always present themselves

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in interrelated clusters, so that to solve one in a certain way strongly influences the manner of tackling the others.

It is not enough to say that a "just proportion" and a "harmonious relation" should be established between the two sectors. How define this proportion? And where locate this harmony? The answers bring us right into the field of politics and into the midst of the polemics going on among the leaders and the technical, economic, and political cadres of the Cuban Revolution.

In the first years of the Revolution, until almost 1962, the leadership thought it could industrialize Cuba quickly even to the point of manufacturing producer goods. This idea was unrealistic and had to be abandoned by the Cuban leaders: Che Guevara has acknowledged the error more than once, most recently in the course of his participation in Algerian discussions on planning in the summer of 1963.

But this does not mean that the idea of industrialization has been abandoned, industry being the basis of progress and of raising the standard of living of the population. Well then, where will the funds for industrialization come from?

Cuba is a country which depends in great measure on foreign trade. With what it gets for sugar, tobacco, and other agricultural exports it acquires the industrial products it needs. This structure, inherited from the capitalist and semi-colonial past, cannot be changed by an act of will, but only by the planning of future development. For this change, capital is needed. And during the entire initial stage, it can only come from two sources: international financing or income earned from foreign trade.

Although Cuba's access to financing from capitalist countries has been closed off, there are now in its stead the credits extended by the socialist countries, primarily the Soviet Union. But these credits are not limitless, and they must also be used to cover the enormous costs involved in replacing all of Cuba's industrial equipment and all of its technology, inherited from North America, with that of the socialist camp. There is, at least for the present, no other choice: the blockade is very tight, and North American machinery which comes to a stop for lack

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of replacement parts is very difficult to start up again. When this happens, new machinery must be imported from the socialist countries. Think of what this means to an underdeveloped country without great financial resources. It is not surprising that the blockade causes destruction which costs Cuba the equivalent of a small war. In the light of this reality, it is easy to understand that talk in the abstract about the difficulties of the Cuban economy, supposedly attributable to nationalization and planning, makes no sense.

The credits mentioned above have placed Cuba in an unbalanced commercial position, particularly with the Soviet Union, and this introduces a new element of pressure on all the policies of the Cuban Revolution. Cuba is a debtor of the Soviet Union, and this debt has been increasing, not diminishing, a situation not entirely displeasing to the United States government which understandably trusts Khrushchev more than Fidel Castro.

For the rest, the resources provided by foreign commerce derive primarily from sugar. The production of sugar fell until it reached its lowest point during the last harvest, and the destruction of the 1963 hurricane promises an even smaller harvest in 1964.

On his return from the Soviet Union in 1963, Fidel Castro placed even greater emphasis on the need to expand cultivation of sugar cane and production of sugar, and to concentrate all energies on agriculture as the basis for the development of the country. The assured market for sugar in the socialist countries, he said, should provide the resources for economic development. He emphasized not only sugar cane but also dairy cattle, a branch of agriculture in which he said Cuba could, provided it made the necessary effort, attain yields comparable to those of a country like Holland.

This means, according to Castro, devoting more resources to the countryside, resources which can be obtained only by reducing investments in early industrial development. In a later speech, for example, he questioned a project for an iron mill in Santiago de Cuba which had previously been approved.

Cuba needs to increase its agricultural production; everyone in the island knows this. On the state farms, production

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costs are considerably higher than on private farms; and it would be very difficult to convince private farmers of the advantages of joining a collective if in practice they do not see the nationalized farms producing greater yields.

Even among private farmers there has been a sector uninterested in increasing yields. This is due partly to political reasons, an attitude of passive and sometimes active resistance on the part of the well-to-do farmers against the revolutionary government. The so-called "second agrarian reform" was a blow directed at this sector: this decree recently nationalized all farms between five *caballerias* and thirty *caballerias*, of which there were more than six thousand on the whole island.*

But the problems do not end here. The small farmer also has reasons for not increasing production too much. He measures his results and his gains not by the amount of money the state pays him but, primarily, by what he can buy in the market with this money. And in the market at the present time he cannot buy many of the industrial products previously imported because they are simply not there.

To spur the small farmer to produce more, the state stores, the *Tiendas del Pueblo* of the countryside, must offer him a greater variety and quantity of goods. Although the stores are well-stocked by present Cuban rationing standards, there is no doubt that here too the effects of the blockade are felt.

For this reason, the advocates of priority for industrial development maintain that, to encourage an increase in agricultural production, the production of industrial goods must be given an immediate push. They add, on the other hand, that increasing the state farms' productivity does not depend so much on larger investments—which would have to be taken from industry and would, after a certain point, not yield a proportionately higher return—as on better organized work and production in general, on improved organization which is also needed in the development of industry. There is no reason, according to Cuban technicians, why each dollar's worth of product on the state farms should cost approximately a dollar

* A *caballeria* is roughly equal to thirty-three acres. The Agrarian Reform of 1959 made thirty *caballerias* the maximum amount of land available to private farmers.—Translator.

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and twenty cents, nor why the private farmer should continue to get a substantially better yield with inferior technical resources.

There is no solution through large-scale importation of consumer goods from the socialist countries. For one thing, foreign exchange is lacking and the balance of trade is becoming increasingly unfavorable. And for another, such goods are already in short supply in the socialist countries themselves.

Moreover, equalling Holland's dairy production seems as adventurous a hope as building a self-sufficient industry in a few years. It is not the underdeveloped countries but the industrialized ones, with all the technical and social advantages they possess, which are capable of achieving this kind of productivity.

Given this point of view, priority always goes to industry no matter where you start from.

In recent speeches, Fidel Castro has left the dilemma still unresolved. Meanwhile the national polemic continues between the "industrializing" sector, headed by the Minister of Industry, Comandante Che Guevara, and the "agricultural" sector represented by Carlos Rafael Rodriguez, president of INRA (the National Institute of Agrarian Reform), who comes from the old leadership of the *Partido Socialista Popular* (Communist Party).

The controversy takes in other problems, principally international policy and the policy for organizing the national economy. There, as we shall see, the alignments are repeated.

MONEY OR REVOLUTION?

Increasing production is one of the major concerns of the Cuban economy. In the present situation, it is not only a problem of investment but also of the productivity of labor in existing enterprises, agricultural as well as industrial.

The slow increase in productivity per worker—in some areas it is at a standstill, in others it is actually decreasing—creates various problems. On the one hand, there is an excess of labor in many industries. Nobody has been laid off and, owing to a lack of important raw materials or breakage of machinery,

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production has had to be cut back. When small nationalized shops have been merged or closed down as obsolete, all of their workers have been found other jobs, or have been sent to technical schools at their old pay, or have been continued in jobs in the main superfluous. What the Cuban state has avoided in all cases is that nationalization should mean layoffs and unemployment. But productivity has suffered.

On the other hand, new administrative personnel in the nationalized enterprises, quickly mobilized to replace the old directors and administrators, lacked experience, and this led to a deterioration in the internal organization of these companies. This has not always happened, but the Revolution has only recently begun to establish its own administrative continuity at this level and to train new administrators in special schools.

There has also appeared, under different guises, a relative relaxation of work discipline. For a long time the government has been fighting that early tendency to suspend work for political meetings and rallies, insisting that all such activities should take place outside working hours. (It was very easy in the past for the administration of an enterprise "to politicize itself" and disorganize production with the best political intentions in the world.)

But work discipline is not worth anything if the worker does not have a direct interest in what he is doing, whether the interest derives from his support of the Revolution, from personal enthusiasm for his particular job, or from desire to earn more money. This is particularly true of the kind of discipline which exists in Cuba, voluntary for the most part and free from political and economic methods of coercion.

What incentive impels a worker to produce more? In a capitalist country, it is clearly a combination of money rewards and a system of punishments; the latter may take the form of layoffs or of external pressures of one kind or another on his conscience.

In Cuba, the system of punishments practically does not exist, except in extreme cases of proven production sabotage or complete non-performance of work. Until very lately, no system of rewards existed either. This is the starting point of the controversy about whether material incentives (money re-

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wards) or moral incentives (socialist ideals) are most effective in moving the worker to increase his production and take an interest in his work.

The school of thought which in socialist countries could be defined as conservative or rightist maintains that only material incentives (a system of rewards so closely differentiated as to amount to piece work) can increase production. The defenders of this view present various arguments about the "socialist" character of material incentives, despite the fact that since Marx's time socialist theorists have recognized that such a system is essentially capitalist and should be resorted to under socialism only as a temporary and transitional measure to be gradually abandoned as the economy approaches closer to the socialist ideal.

The school of thought which, in contrast, can be defined as left-wing maintains that material incentives, though one may have to make use of them in certain cases, must be completely relegated to second place. In this view, the principal incentives for a worker under a regime of transition to socialism should be revolutionary enthusiasm, the understanding that he is working to build socialism, and the stimulus provided by the example set by consciously socialist vanguard workers. This view asserts that a system of material incentives, if widely used, undermines the foundations of socialist development, obliquely reintroduces the seeds of capitalism, and gravely underestimates the importance of the workers' revolutionary enthusiasm.

In Cuba, Carlos Rafael Rodriguez is one of the advocates of the first school, Ernesto Che Guevara of the second. Blas Roca has come out more or less openly for material incentives, and Osvaldo Dorticos for priority to moral incentives. Given the veiled or indirect form which controversies take in Cuba, none of the statements of these men has been completely clear, the differences being rather matters of shading and emphasis. Nevertheless, an emphasis here and an emphasis there do signify the existence of a profound and real controversy.

The technicians from the European socialist countries—primarily from the USSR and secondarily from Czechoslovakia—have strongly urged upon the Cuban leaders the need to give priority to material incentives. In their countries, the need

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for such incentives has been raised to the level of a theory; and what their economic leaders offer to the workers is not simply the vision of a socialist future or of the development of the revolution in other countries, but above all the prospect of buying a television set or better clothes or even a motorcycle or automobile. This, in its way, serves to depoliticize work and encourages a tendency for everyone to devote himself to his individual future: the workers to busy themselves with producing and the leaders with leading, that is, with politics.

In Cuba, it is a cult to depoliticize nothing. Politics—that is, the Revolution—is the daily bread of every Cuban. And if a whole sector of the Cuban leadership, including its most important figures, insist on moral incentives, it is because they want to stimulate production by consciously basing their decisions on politics.

But the very character of moral incentives is under discussion in Cuba.

For example, one of the ways of raising enthusiasm for work is the emulation campaign. Emulation is measured by a point system for punctuality, attendance, quantity and quality of production, and other similar indices. In each factory, workers who want to participate sign up for the campaign. Those who win—that is, those who each month make the highest points in their category—are given honorific distinctions as "vanguard workers." At the regional and national levels, other prizes are given, such as a week's paid vacation at some tourist center or a trip to a socialist country. But the real point of the emulation campaign is the moral satisfaction of being recognized as a vanguard worker.

All this is inconceivable in a capitalist regime, where the enterprise is private and is operated for profit and where the worker is not interested in production, which is the owner's concern, but in his wages. In a regime where private property has been nationalized, on the other hand, there are neither bosses nor private profits, and the workers do take an interest in production and themselves carry it forward.

Nevertheless, emulation often has a formal character. Norms are fulfilled because they have been established, and routine takes over the whole system. Emulation for emulation's sake,

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without other outside inducements, runs the permanent risk of becoming one more bureaucratic institution, something which leaves the worker quite indifferent.

Another form of moral incentive is the example set by volunteer workers. On Saturday afternoons and Sundays, "red battalions" of volunteer workers undertake to perform special tasks, such as cutting cane, or working in a factory or office different from those in which they are regularly employed. These volunteer workers are a minority, but they are a big minority and they have inexhaustible enthusiasm. During the sugar cane harvest, caravans of trucks leave the cities at dawn with volunteer cane cutters for nearby fields.

There is another type of more sustained volunteer work: the worker or office employee who puts in as many hours as needed at his own regular place of work to complete some urgent job or to solve some problem which the lack of replacement parts, raw materials, or technicians has created.

In all this money plays no part. The driving force is enthusiasm for the Revolution, the conviction that the job is for the good of all and for oneself too. It is, above all, the worker's discovery of a meaning in his daily work: he does it no longer just to make a living, but to build something which he sees and feels as his own.

This is not, however, all there is to it. The big problem is not to mobilize a minority, given this environment, but to attract and arouse the majority. And it is at this point that one school says it is possible to succeed and the other maintains that there is no incentive as effective as money rewards to induce the great majority to raise their productivity.

At present Cuba is establishing a system of work norms (norms which exist in all organized capitalist businesses) to fix the quantity and quality of production for each operative. For performance above the norm, a premium is paid which rises to twenty percent of the total wage: this is the maximum paid, for if production is higher, it is an indication that the norm is too low and should be readjusted. It is clear that these norms, although they introduce a form of premiums, do not add up to a system of money incentives of the kind which exists in some other socialist countries.

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Yugoslavia is the country which in one sense has gone furthest with this kind of incentive; there the principle of "the material interest of workers in production results" is put into operation by self-management committees. These committees run the businesses from the larger economic point of view as well, and they are interested in economic results—profits—being the highest possible, for these profits are mainly distributed in the form of bonuses among the personnel of the company.

So effective in appearance, this system in practice brings with it competition between the different companies, agreements among companies not to increase production but to increase profits, disorganization of the central economic plan, and privileges for more modern enterprises at the cost of poorer or more backward ones. That is, it attacks the very heart of the functioning of the system of transition to socialism, central planning and the subordination of individual effort to the collective objectives of society.

Without quite copying the Yugoslav system, the school represented by Carlos Rafael Rodriguez would introduce the principle of distributing the enterprise's profits to its personnel as material incentives. This method of functioning means that the management's economic performance is measured by money, by the higher or lower profits which the company makes.

Minister of Industry Che Guevara is opposed to this theory; he wants to keep the economy centralized and to measure economic performance by centrally controlled economic indices in accordance with guide lines set by each year's plan. The extent to which the enterprise over- or under-fulfills these indices will tell if it is functioning well, regularly, or badly, and what has to be corrected.

The school represented by Che Guevara shows a particular hostility to gauging performance by profits, a hostility which derives from the fact that using this criterion reintroduces a type of semi-competition among enterprises and breaks down the centralized management of the economy. Competition tends to take precedence over planning, and the individual's or the enterprise's material interest over socialist collective interest embodied in the plan. According to the Cuban Minister of Industry, the socialist economy tends, furthermore, toward cen-

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tralized management, and this trend will be accentuated more and more as automation and linear production programming are introduced. Running enterprises on a profit basis introduces, on the other hand, individualistic and anti-socialist monetary incentives as the driving force of production; socialist consciousness is thus reserved for holidays and revolutionary celebrations.

Che Guevara in one of his speeches said that while capitalist competition is "a struggle among beasts," the system of self-management aiming at maximum profits is "a struggle among caged beasts."

Since the controversy is unresolved, both systems exist in Cuba today: in INRA enterprises, financial self-management; in those of the Ministry of Industry, control by budget.

Externally, this whole question is linked to the discussion going on now in socialist countries on the functioning of the law of value during the transition to socialism. Articles on this very question have been published which take issue with each other: one by the Minister of Industry in the magazine published by his Ministry, and the other by the Minister of Foreign Commerce, Comandante Alberto Mora, in the magazine *Comercio Exterior.*

Internationally, this problem arises in the system—and its working methods—of commercial relations between socialist countries (particularly in Comecon, the Council for Mutual Economic Aid); and domestically, in the criteria used in determining wage scales in Cuba. The partisans of material incentives advocate stretching the scale out, while the partisans of moral incentives want to compress it. Thus, one proposal would set a scale of one to ten, from the minimum wage of 75 pesos a month (with deductions) to the maximum salary of 700 pesos for a Minister; another, on the other hand, would hold this maximum down to 500 or 550 pesos. If you want to appeal to socialist consciousness, then the trend to greater equality is a fundamental factor.

The opponents of material incentives have another argument at this juncture: when there is a scarcity of consumer goods as in Cuba today, raising wages does not, after a certain point, mean much to the worker, for he cannot buy what he

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would like. Consequently, if material concerns are to be his outlook, he would rather earn less and make less effort.

On this last point the statistics look bad: in 1962 wage payments, pensions, etc., rose to approximately 2,500 million pesos, while total sales of merchandise did not exceed 1,700 million. Even discounting savings, there still remains an inflationary gap which oscillates between 500 and 600 million pesos without a counterpart in merchandise to absorb it.

Other aspects of the controversy lead directly to politics. To interest workers in production, banners and honorific mention are not enough. Appeals to socialist consciousness are not enough either. The threat of invasion in October, 1962, evoked an economic phenomenon which was later discussed and studied in Cuba: with fewer personnel—since many were mobilized—enterprises maintained and increased production. In the face of danger to the Revolution and the country, everyone started to produce. National life had a central, concrete goal: to defeat the imperialist enemy.

On the other hand, situations of political uncertainty for the Revolution—the unresolved dispute between the USSR and China, for example, a subject which vitally interests the whole Cuban people—have a contrary effect. Interest in production slackens. A good turn in the Latin American revolutionary movement awakens enthusiasm. If the Cuban leaders in their speeches, appeals, and policy decisions ally themselves with this turn, heightened enthusiasm is evident the very next day in the streets and centers of production. This is not an exaggeration: in any enterprise where production is intimately tied to politics and not to the enterprise's profits, political events in which the workers take part or which arouse them, call forth their support in the form of greater productive efforts. The same thing happens in the Soviet Union itself where it has been observed that productivity increases in factories filling orders for Cuba.

Another obstacle to increasing production was spelled out for me one night by a Cuban worker at a center for political study. He told me, "Do you know why people don't work harder? Because they're not happy with the union leaders. Every Cuban worker is furious with them and so they get dis-

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gusted and work less. You can't produce more when such a situation exists." I heard this unfavorable opinion of the top union leaders more than once from revolutionary workers and Fidelistas. But this, the Cuban problem of problems, requires a more extended explanation.

THE UNIONS IN CUBA

He who tries to depict the Revolution as a monolithic unity without failures or internal contrasts can only be ingenuous or a falsifier interested in covering up the complex inner workings of the Revolution.

The Revolution develops through contradictions and not just by clashes with the imperialist enemy but also between its own forces and trends. Its real life, its practical line, the actual road it travels—all these emerge from its inner dynamics, not from the minds of two or three of its leaders. One of the areas in which these contradictions appear most clearly outlined is in the trade unions. You have only to live for a time in Cuba, participate in the Revolution's activities, and be in daily contact with the Cuban people to learn of one leader who enjoys the unanimous opposition of the Cuban workers; he is today as much a part of the Cuban leadership as Escalante was until just the other day, and he is no other than the general secretary of the *Central de Trabajadores de Cuba Revolucionaria* (CTCR), Lazaro Peña.

This is not a secret nor gossip among the initiated. It is an opinion current in the streets of Havana and all over Cuba, and it blossoms into the open a few minutes after you start talking about the union situation. One worker told me that Lazaro Peña was the artisan of the most complete unity you can find among Cuban workers: unity against him.

In reality, the secretary general of the CTCR is paying for both his and others' faults, for on his head is concentrated the discontent of a great part of the workers with the state of the unions in Cuba.

The secretary general of the CTCR was elected at the last national congress which took place in 1961. He was elected under the single-slate system, which means that no opponent

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could compete with him for office. His appointment was more of a decision from above than an election from below. Cuban workers who support and defend the Revolution to the death made no organized opposition to this single-slate system because of a belief which guides their every step and action: they will bring no harm to the Revolution and will hold back or wait when they are convinced that some protest, no matter how justified, could do so. Of course, this feeling can sometimes be exploited by people interested in imposing their own decisions, whether the people like them or not. But this attitude also has limits: when the people see that more harm is caused the Revolution by shutting up or yielding to the pressures of those who have a personal interest in silencing protests, they will speak up and say what has to be said.

Lazaro Peña cannot easily count on the support of workers, for there are many episodes in his history as a trade union leader in Cuba which cannot be talked about today. For example, he was leader of the CTCR in 1939, during the time of his party's (the Cuban Communist Party) alliance with Batista, and as such he put the brakes on or disarmed strike after strike; he did this in the name of that alliance and to help the cause of the "democracies" to triumph during the Second World War: in Cuba "there was no need to strike." Any forty-year-old Cuban worker remembers this well, just as newspaper photographs in which Lazaro Peña appeared on the same platform with Batista are remembered—or saved.

(I have listened to all this innumerable times; and I want to make use of this parenthesis to make clear, for the sake of what follows, that I have never talked to counter-revolutionaries in Cuba. In the first place, because they are completely uninteresting—one has only to read the North American newspapers on Cuba—and, second, for simple reasons of personal hygiene.)

Though the people have longer and surer memories than imbeciles like to think, Lazaro Peña's history is not the primary reason for opposition to him today. The main reason is not his past activity but his present function. Remembrance of his past serves to reinforce today's opinions; if this were not so, no one would care to remember.

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There are twenty-five national unions in Cuba, one for each industrial sector. The larger ones are in sugar, textiles, railways, restaurants, and construction. Each union has a national and provincial leadership, and also a leadership for each enterprise or work center. The organization at the work-center level is called the union section. The union section corresponds to what in other places would be called shop committees or factory locals.

What is the function of the unions in a proletarian state like Cuba, where enterprises are nationalized and there are no bosses and no private profit?

At the time of the establishment of the New Economic Policy in the Soviet Union in 1921, Lenin said that unions are organizations of workers the task of which is to defend their particular economic interests against the state administration itself. In his famous controversy with Trotsky over unions, which was the prelude to the establishment of the NEP, Lenin maintained that this was true even when the state was in the hands of the workers. It was a workers' state with a large peasant element and with bureaucratic distortions, and the unions could, consequently, find themselves in a situation in which they needed, as representatives of the workers' interests, to confront functionaries of their own state and, if necessary, even to call strikes.

Lenin pointed out that unions under capitalism are fundamentally different. According to his thesis, the latter by fighting for economic rights come into conflict with the regime of private property, and they must, if led by revolutionaries, help break down the system and not care whether the struggle for their own rights harms the capitalist state, an alien and hostile apparatus. In states which are in transition to socialism, as in Cuba and other socialist countries, the unions act within the state regime; they do not tend to be revolutionary but are "reformist" with respect to their own state, and, even when it comes to the economic rights of workers, always take into consideration the general interests of the workers' state. As it was formulated, this concept presupposes the existence of a rich inner dialectic, a free play of what Mao Tse-tung was later to call "the non-antagonistic contradictions."

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The other concept, which dates from the Stalin period, defines unions as organizations whose job it is to acquaint workers with the point of view of the state leadership, to organize work for production, to run emulation campaigns, and to check up on the workers' productivity; the union's job is also to resolve minor disputes by acting as a sort of arbitrator between the administration and the workers, who are identified with the collective. In any case, this concept maintains that there are no antagonisms between the state and the workers, since it is the latter who are in power, and that the union should work in close contact and in complete unanimity with the management of each work center to achieve the highest production yield.

In Cuba this second concept is officially practiced—although with a certain elasticity—and from it derive the problems of the unions.

The unions, then, serve to transmit to the rank and file the leaders' point of view and to convince the workers that they should not raise such and such problems. A long stretch separates Lenin's concept in which the union acts in the name of the workers, and this later one in which the union represents the administration to the workers. The function assigned to the unions explains the system of electing leaders.

The most curious thing about all this is that, despite what one might superficially imagine, it is not the second concept which serves to increase production (although it may appear more "peaceful" to the leaders of the state). Feeling that they are not represented by their organizations and having no other organized way of expressing their discontent with this or that situation which they think is unjust or wrong, the workers unconsciously tend to feel disgusted and to reduce their productive effort. It is this state of affairs which a Cuban worker summed up so graphically when he told me that to raise production, there had to be a change in the union leadership.

The Cuban union leaders have been bringing orientation from above down to the workers, putting aside their own opinions to accept what the state leaders tell them without argument, and doing the job of getting the workers to work more—all things which are the task of management or of the workers themselves. These activities have lost them their au-

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thority with the rank and file, for the latter feel that such leaders do not depend on them but on the state. And consequently the workers respond to appeals from the Revolution's leaders—Fidel Castro, Che Guevara—but not to the appeals of the union leaders. All this is learned and experienced and lived by anyone who stops in Cuba today and lives a few weeks with the Cuban people.

How did Cuba arrive at such a role for its unions? No revolution advances in a straight line, and the case of Escalante was not the only contradiction within the Cuban Revolution. The present union leadership was elected during that period which was described by Che Guevara and other leaders as "the mechanical transplanting of the experiences of other socialist countries." The single slate was established in union elections in the name of "unity." This system had the endorsement of the Revolution's leadership, and so it was accepted.

In practice, the elected leaders did not feel dependent on the rank and file but on those above—on those to whom they actually owed their jobs. The state and its representatives in the enterprises—the managers—naturally and logically tend to try to impose their point of view as each problem comes up. And the union leaders, instead of speaking up for the workers when they disagree, act out the contrary role of those who bring pressure to bear on the workers to convince them. From this arises a permanent state of crisis in the union locals, which in many cases have been degraded to the point where their function is limited to the performance of simple administrative tasks.

I have attended more than one union meeting in Cuba, and the first thing that strikes the eye is the seating at the gathering. On one side, the workers. On the other, the president, the administrator, the personnel manager, and the local union leader—in other words, the leadership. I remember one meeting in a small textile factory: scarcely five feet separated the platform from the workers, but this space seemed set off by a transparent wall. Yet the administrator and the union leader on one side and the workers on the other had something crucial in common, something that they could never have in a capitalist enterprise: all were in accord with the Revolution and defended it. But at this very moment the place of the union leader should

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have been on the other side if that wall was to come down. This was easy to see, so much so that when a discussion about work started between the representative of the administration and some workers, the union leader became merely a decorative figure, quiet and absent.

This does not always happen. In spite of all, the union leader is under constant pressure from the rank and file, especially if he works in the factory: pressure in the form of demands and criticisms, or of glacial indifference to his appeals. On the other hand, he also suffers the pressure of what he has been told is his mission: to convince the rank and file and not to make himself the transmitter of their opinions and protests. In this dilemma, more than one local leader has decided to become the voice of the rank and file vis-à-vis either the plant management or the union higher-ups themselves.

Last September, Lazaro Peña personally went to a general meeting of construction workers in the heavy equipment sector (tractors, derricks, pneumatic drills, bulldozers, etc.). He went to ask the meeting to approve the following: when equipment which a worker operates breaks down, the worker will agree to work at a lesser job and accept the wage for that category instead of the wage he has been receiving. This had already been proposed by Fidel Castro, but the workers were not in agreement: what with the deterioration of equipment and the lack of replacement parts, the breakdown of a machine could mean a considerable loss of income. The union leaders in this sector were not eager to face the rank and file directly with these demands. The secretary general of the CTCR therefore had to go himself, and a scandal broke out at the meeting. A worker told him that when he gave up his automobile and went to work with them, they would accept his proposition. Another reminded him of his old collaboration with Batista. Others accused him of enjoying privileges. The meeting was suspended in great confusion. The press denounced the incident, first as the work of "counter-revolutionaries," later as the work of "confusionists." In subsequent meetings, better prepared by the leaders but much less well attended by the workers, the proposition brought by Lazaro Peña was carried.

The accusation that the incidents at the meeting were or-

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ganized by the "counter-revolution" was so indefensible that it had to be abandoned twenty-four hours later. Those very workers who had spoken up in the meeting were militiamen, and some were even members of the PURS (United Socialist Revolutionary Party), men who were ready to take up rifles at a moment's notice to defend the Revolution and the government of Fidel Castro, to die if necessary. It was absurd for anyone to maintain that the counter-revolution, so isolated and demoralized in Cuba, could have the slightest influence, particularly in the case of the construction workers. Such charges could only be intended to throw sand in people's eyes and to shut the door on any real explanation and, consequently, on any real solution.

The clash between the leadership of the CTCR and the construction workers did not surprise objective observers of what had been happening in union circles. It brought to light, as dozens of comments and minor incidents had been doing, a state of dissatisfaction with the union leadership and a desire for change on the part of the workers. If these feelings seem to concentrate on one man, it is not due to a "cult of personality" in reverse but to the way the unions function; the present set-up prevents such feelings from being better expressed. The workers also want to show in one way or another that they make a clear distinction between the leaders of the Revolution, the men of the Sierra Maestra led by Fidel Castro, and those who collaborate with them in the government today but who have a very different past and in their present acts reflect attitudes acquired in that past.

When incidents and situations like these come out into the open, they appear as harbingers of change in the course of the Revolution. It is ridiculous to assert, as enemies of the Revolution do, that the Cuban unions do not exist or that they are simply administrative organs. If that were true, the workers would abandon them and find other means. Rather, these conflicts indicate that there is a will for change which is looking for ways to express itself. The desired change is not opposed to the present course of the Revolution; it seeks to remove the obstacles which conservative tendencies put in its way.

The Cuban workers never have accepted the theory of the

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identity between the unions and the state, although the state is its very own.

The inner dialectic of union life is a most lively, intense process, and it is preparing the way for great new accomplishments in Cuba today. This dialectic is reflected in the very leadership of the state. It will not be long before it brings about a new relationship between the unions and the Cuban state. This relationship—far from confirming the crystal-ball pronouncements of those who, out of personal interest in holding on to their positions, would congeal the Revolution—will not weaken the revolutionary state nor give comfort to its enemies; it will, instead, serve to consolidate the flexible, live solidarity of the Cuban Revolution, keep it tied to its real popular roots, enrich its inner life and its influence abroad.

THE SECOND AGRARIAN REFORM

The Cuban Revolution also has its own small Vendée.* For a time it tried to gather strength in the Escambray mountains but, despite the arms dropped by North American airplanes, the small counter-revolutionary bands could not keep going and were annihilated. The North American arms were taken by the militia, and you can see in Cuba today more than one militiaman carrying with special pride a rifle recently "made in the U.S.A."

But the Cuban Vendée has not only a foreign but also a native origin. It is true that the forces of the counter-revolution in the cities are totally debilitated—on the one hand by the blows they have received, and on the other by the exodus to the United States (the government lets anyone leave who wants to). Popular pressure and vigilance also throw them constantly into a state of demoralization.

Isolated and dispersed in the cities, the counter-revolution found, as was to be expected, a refuge in the countryside. A hidden, indirect counter-revolution also exists in the sectors of well-paid functionaries, careerists, and privilege seekers. But

* The reference is to the famous counter-revolutionary insurrection which took place during the French Revolution in Vendée and adjacent areas of western France.—Translator.

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this type of counter-revolution—the most insidious because it clothes itself in phrases which sound revolutionary—is another story, worth telling by itself.

The refuge of the counter-revolution in the countryside was the rich agricultural sector of the population which continued to exist after the agrarian reform nationalizing all lands down to thirty *caballerias*. Farmers who possess less than five *caballerias* are considered small farmers and belong to the National Association of Small Farmers through which they obtain credits and regulate their relations with the state. Until recently, those owning from five to thirty *caballerias* made up the category of middle and rich farmers.

There were more than six thousand of these, and they were, in the main, landlords who lived in the cities and had their lands worked for them; some were farmers whose past or present position gave them a certain influence with poor farmers of the region who were a species of "clientele." Owing to their economic and social situation, many of these middle and rich farmers opposed the Revolution, for it had closed off their chance of becoming a farming bourgeoisie and of increasing their holdings.

In a country with a more solid and widespread industrial structure it would perhaps have been easier for a socialist regime to use this category of farmers and if not to win them over at least to neutralize them. The greater importance of industry would have reduced their influence and at the same time would have given them a sufficiency of consumer goods for immediate use or of semi-lasting value. Industry would have made these goods available also to the small farmers who would have been more strongly attracted by the city's influence, thus weakening the rich farmers' potential power in the rural areas. But under Cuban conditions, the natural hostility to socialism of the rich farmer—prevented from further enriching himself and acquiring more land—was bound to turn into enmity. It was also inevitable that he would try to drag with him a class of middle and even small farmers who were disgusted with the difficulties of revolution; for while the city worker understands these difficulties and endures them because he sees socialism as his future, the farmer does not see anything beyond the boun-

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daries of his own piece of land. The rich farmer thus came to provide shelter for the activities of the counter-revolution which were also fostered and encouraged from abroad.

In addition to all this, a tendency to create a black market is always present. The prices of farm goods for the city are fixed. The state buys them from the farmers (and from the people's collectives) through the buying agency of INRA and sells them through the distribution network of the Ministry of Internal Commerce.

The farmers cannot go to the city and create a competing market there. But they are allowed to sell their products at their farms or on the highways. At the same time, no automobile is allowed to enter the city with more than twenty-five pounds of farm produce. All these measures put the brakes on the black market but do not manage to stop it. By many invisible networks the farmer finds a way to sell part of his product to those who have money to pay. Those who have money are either the remaining old bourgeoisie or high-salaried functionaries with cars to take them to the countryside. Thus, speculation has two heads, the man who buys and the man who sells. Speculation exerts a permanent pressure on prices despite the fact that the distribution apparatus of the state has managed to maintain sufficient stocks for the population within the limits of rationing quotas.

The Cuban government has just [autumn, 1963] taken drastic measures to solve these problems by nationalizing all property larger than five *caballerias*. With this decree, the state, which formerly owned about forty percent of the land, now owns nearly seventy percent, according to an estimate made by Carlos Rafael Rodriguez. The economic base of a whole class hostile to the Revolution has been eliminated. This measure comes accompanied by plans for reorganizing the state collectives, readjusting their holdings (in some cases very large) or regrouping different entities in accordance with the needs of physical planning or of production.

At the same time, Fidel Castro at the last meeting of the National Association of Small Farmers guaranteed the small farmers ownership of their lands for as long as they wanted to

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continue as private farmers, without associating themselves with a cooperative or a farm collective.

This is called the "Second Agrarian Reform," and according to the government's declaration, it establishes the definitive standard for land ownership in Cuba. It brings to an end the uncertain situation which led many farmers not to increase production or improve their lands, since they were afraid of eventual expropriation. In the cities, popular reaction was very favorable; not only was the measure approved, but it was a commonplace to hear people say that it should have been taken sooner.

As for the small farmers, the revolutionary government has pursued a steady policy designed to keep them as allies. Even with this class, success has not always been achieved: the farmer first sees his piece of land, then the country and the Revolution. Nevertheless, the majority do support the Revolution. What has been done in the countryside is certainly great enough to compensate for scarcities and other difficulties in the farmer's books.

In the first place, the literacy campaign brought the great majority of the farmers to the Revolution. Besides, hospitals and schools have been built in all farm areas, and teachers and doctors have gone to places where previously only quacks took care of the sick.

In the Sierra Maestra, vanguard teachers work in the remotest mountainsides where they have to go on foot three, four, or five hours from the place where the jeep must leave them because it can go no further. There they build schools together with the farmers, bring books and notebooks, teach the children in the mornings and the adults in the afternoon, and take care of thousands of problems that have nothing to do with teaching. In the same places, doctors have come to serve in recently built hospitals in the most out-of-the-way places. In the Sierra, a system of mountain transport has extended its network to bring the cities closer to places where even beasts of burden used to have a hard time entering. Dozens of farm families have sons studying in the cities or in the army. In Havana and other centers there are more than 70,000 scholarship students, the majority children of farmers, besides those who have been sent to the socialist countries.

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Apart from land, the most commanding rewards for farmers in all of Latin America are schools, hospitals, roads, teachers, doctors and transport. Without all these, and without a good system of government purchase of farm produce, credits, and technical help, any agrarian reform would be paralyzed or become a mere formality. It is these things which ensure farm support of the Revolution.

But I must add that all this would have been impossible without the social climate created by the Revolution, for it set up conditions which inspired thousands of high school and university students to become rural teachers and go to the most isolated places to teach the farmers. These young people have accepted any sacrifice which came their way, and hundreds of doctors have gone to practice in all corners of the island, abandoning all the comforts of the cities to do so. It is not money or salaries but enthusiasm for the Revolution which has given them the necessary push, and it must be added that these men and women do not feel like heroes or martyrs but like people simply doing a job.

There are farm militias in the Sierra Maestra, and they are organized into mountain companies. These are the groups in which farm support of the Revolution is concentrated. The members of these mountain companies are volunteers, for the principle of volunteering reigns as in all Cuban militias. This means they are select groups, since only those who want to defend the Revolution join up, and they are for this reason a political nucleus among the farming population.

As I have just indicated, another aspect of the situation which is decisive in maintaining farm support is the economic policy toward the countryside. On the one hand, the farmers receive credits for their production. On the other, the purchasing agency is also of fundamental importance. Failures on the part of the purchasing agency, which on more than one occasion have been responsible for serious losses in the countryside, have harmed relations with farmers. Eliminating them has lately been one of INRA's main concerns.

The problem of prices has also arisen. In reality, there is an invisible farm pressure for an increase in prices. This pres-

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sure shows up in sales outside the official channels, on the highway or the black market, and also in holding down production, or in exchanges among the farmers themselves. These exchanges can, for example, consist of obtaining rice (the quota of which is small for the Cuban farmer who is accustomed to eat much rice) for eggs or other products. If prices have nevertheless been maintained at their present levels, it has been due to the state collectives which act as regulators. But the higher production costs of the latter also exercise upward pressure on prices. For some time now, many technicians have argued the need to raise prices to stimulate greater farm production. And in fact recent increases, although officially explained as helping to pay in part for the damage of the hurricane, are also a response to this persistent pressure.

On the other hand, as we have said, the problem does not simply arise from the amount of money the farmer makes, but from what he can buy with it. If there is little to be bought, price increases in the countryside may have no stimulating effect on production.

Today with seventy percent of the land nationalized, the problems of the countryside in Cuba are concentrated in the organization of the state collectives, in the implementation of a system of administration which permits each farmer to participate in the management of the collective, in raising the productivity of state lands and making them produce more and more cheaply than the lands of the private farmers. This last objective has yet to be reached and has been given first priority by the government.

But it must not be forgotten that at this stage the vital centers of the Cuban Revolution are in the cities and particularly in industry. A general improvement in the social and economic organization of the nation will have to begin there if a solid framework is to be provided for nationalized agriculture. Only then will the state farms take their planned place as the most productive agricultural units, and only in this way can the socialist system be consolidated in the countryside and gradually absorb, by force of example and economic results, the remaining 200,000 small farmers.

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TWO TENDENCIES IN THE REVOLUTION

The failure of the international press to understand the inner development of the Cuban Revolution is unlimited. Hemmed in by schematic notions, it was taken by surprise when the Revolution went socialist; and if one judges by what is being written nowadays, it will continue to be taken by surprise by future developments.

By now it is a commonplace that in the USSR there are different tendencies and that Khrushchev has to work and maneuver with them; that within capitalist governments, diverse tendencies are at work and that conflicting social forces and influences shape the views of their ruling circles. But when it comes to Cuba, most commentators still have not discarded an old formula which has long since been transcended by reality: to divide the leadership of the Cuban Revolution between Fidelistas and Communists and to search frantically in every episode where differences of opinion come into the open for the line of the "Communists" (the former members of the PSP) and that of the "non-Communists" (the old team of the Sierra). Other commentators believe that in Cuba the leadership is always united and that everything is decided by Fidel Castro according to his own whims and fancies. Both of these views involve the assumption that the whys and wherefores of decisions taken by the Cuban leadership are to be found in the minds and wills of highly placed individuals, but never, never, in what happens below, in the real, seething, bustling life of the Cuban people, in its opinions and pressures, in its turns and actions, in its collective decisions. In each of these interpretations, the word "masses" has a pejorative meaning, the masses being those who support the ideas of this or that leader. It is never the other way around—that the masses oblige this or that leader to adopt these ideas.

In actual fact, it is precisely this last situation which prevails in Cuba, with an obviousness which could hardly be more crystal clear.

A good case in point is the way the foreign press saw in the expulsion of Anibal Escalante an action exclusively and independently taken by Fidel Castro as soon as he "learned what

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was happening." What this overlooks is that Fidel Castro himself said publicly a few weeks after the fact that for months the masses had been seeing what was happening and that "if we didn't take this measure now, in a short time we would all be dragged down." ["Drag down" (*arrastrar*) is a Cuban expression which dates from the fall of Machado when the most hated individuals of the regime were not only captured but were literally dragged through the streets.] Even allowing for some polemical exaggeration in the phrase "drag down," there is no doubt whatever that at that moment there existed enormous pressure from below against the abuses and arbitrariness of the whole group represented by Anibal Escalante.

There is no other process which can explain how the Cuban Revolution has developed by discontinuous leaps. To believe in the theory that decisions are exclusively thought up at the top by means of a mysterious gift of "communication with the masses" is equivalent to accepting Genesis as the scientific explanation of the creation of the world.

This is not said to negate, whittle down, or dilute the roles that the leaders play but to explain why and how they can undertake them, which forces they lean on, the pressures which drive them forward and permit them to act with more or less rapidity, decisiveness, and firmness. It is obvious of course that all such pressures are expressed and manifested through leaders to whom they appeal. That is why, even in Cuba, some leaders tend in every decision to orient themselves in accordance with the pressure from below; others bend in the direction of pressure from imperialism (a pressure which is real and exists not only in the fleet which blockades Cuba but in a thousand hidden channels of the play of social forces in and outside of Cuba); and others invariably react in accordance with the opinions or pressures of the leaders of the Soviet Union. (In a time of worldwide nuclear pacts, by the way, these last two pressures have united more than once to present a common front in Cuba—for example, to get Fidel Castro to sign the pact.)

All this inner play of forces occurs in the dark in Cuba, especially for the observer accustomed to look to the newspapers for the presentation of varying points of view. The Cuban press is fearfully uniform: there are eight pages to each newspaper,

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six for sports, spectacles, and current production or organizational activities; one for international news; and one—or less—devoted to comment or its own pronouncements which vary slightly from one paper to the other and in which only the informed eye can distinguish shadings or differences.

The Cuban press is a national calamity. It is not just an information medium; it is a defensive wall against pressure from below, a uniform medium which allows discussions on art criticism or films but never dissent or criticism or proposals for change when it comes to a decision of the government. This is an obvious distortion of socialist principles, as is the existence of an office—The Commission of Revolutionary Orientation (COR)—to control all the newspapers as well as magazines and other publications, so that nothing can be published without COR's permission. To this must be added the absence of any elected bodies with delegates or deputies of the working-class population, like the Soviets in the Russian Revolution, which permitted direct and organized expression of what the different sectors and currents of the population thought about every important problem.

All of this has nothing to do with the classic principles of what is called "the dictatorship of the proletariat"—if the Cuban leaders want to fall back, when they declare themselves Leninists, on what Lenin wrote in *State and Revolution*—but rather with the substitution of the opinions of the men who control the media of communication for the opinions of the proletariat.

But two things must be made clear:

First, the level of democracy really existing in a country is not measured by the press only but by the total social life, and by the real power of the majority of the population over production, the state, and the armed forces. In this real and concrete sense, there is no country today where there is greater democracy than in Cuba.

Second, although the press, radio, and television do display a uniformity, often drab and without combativeness, the real life and the real politics which exist in Cuba express themselves in a real diversity of opinions not only between revolutionaries and counter-revolutionaries but more particularly inside the Revolu-

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tion and its leadership. If it were otherwise, the Revolution would be dead and ready for a museum.

The preceding pages have dealt with some of the principal questions around which such opinions have arisen, questions which constitute what we might call the inner politics of Cuba. But the Left and the Right—and consequently the Center—while not labelling themselves, do express themselves with considerable coherence in all fields, both national and international; for it is impossible to put oneself at one extreme on some fundamental questions and at the opposite on others.

The circumstances of the Cuban Revolution are not simple. Blockaded, with peoples everywhere in favor but their governments opposed, under pressure of an alliance with the USSR whose policies it does not share in many ways, in the middle of the Sino-Soviet dispute, supported by allies who are primarily Khrushchev's not the Cuban leaders' (unless the speeches of Fidel Castro at the January, 1963, Congress of Cuban Women and at the subsequent July 26th celebration were merely random remarks without point), the island is an example of resistance and heroism the depth of which it is not easy to measure. Neither allies nor enemies have learned to gauge, at its furthest and deepest level, the decision of the Cuban people never to turn back or to give in to threats or pressures.

Living in their midst, you know that the collective soul of the Cuban people is set on one goal: to carry forward their Revolution. This is something you can touch with your hands. It manifests itself in the tension of politics. Cuba is a small island. The Cuban people understand and say with all their acts that if it has been able to endure until now it is because of the support of the outside world. If there is a solution to the country's problems, it will not be found through self-isolation on the island, but by gaining new allies, especially in Latin America.

That is why, for example, Cubans follow the turns of the Venezuelan Revolution as if it were their own.

Not only Venezuela. The Cuban people hang on what happens everywhere in the world, but especially in Latin America. Despite bad, deficient, distorted information (for the counter-revolution comes not only in the guise of an enemy "from the sea" but also as a "friendly" commentator or politician who

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thinks the people are not "mature" enough to understand this or that news which he and his bosses find inconvenient to publish), the Cuban people passionately follow the development of the Revolution in Latin America. Anyone who visits the island can see that they are convinced that there is no lasting solution for Cuba without extending the Revolution to the continent.

This conviction acts as a gigantic pressure on the whole island. It is stupid to believe that the Cuban government can act independently of this opinion, even if it wanted to.

You cannot gauge what happens in Cuba nor judge the internal play of social pressures by what happens in a capitalist country. In the latter there is a complicated system of shock absorbers: parliaments, the whole state administrative apparatus, political parties tied to this or that interest, armed forces (army and police) and the laws which uphold them, and a more or less subtle system of diversions, among them the prospect of building a little house, buying a car, doing for oneself and letting the rest of the world go hang, all this regulated and adjusted by commercial propaganda, by the press, by a complete system, in fact, of stimulants and narcotics of all kinds.

In Cuba all that is over. There is only the palpable feeling, the collective conviction, that to save yourself you have to do so together; that to live better, all have to live better together. There is no other way. While social life in other countries encourages the tendency for each to go his own way to help himself, social life in Cuba spontaneously opposes this by its own inner logic.

Then who, why, and how is anyone to resist a social pressure which demands in a thousand different but unanimous manifestations that the Revolution take one particular road and not another?

The Cuban leadership, even if it believed the contrary, could not oppose such pressure frontally, nor would it have the means to do so. (As a matter of fact, of course, it does not in general believe the contrary.) A government disposed to oppose powerful pressures from below must seek the means to do so: it must divide the population with economic privileges for some; create a sector with high, untouchable salaries; respect the sectors which show a socially conservative tendency, whether

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these be high functionaries, businessmen, or farmers with large holdings. In general, a government of this type not only creates these means but is first of all a product of them.

But in Cuba it is clear that recently adopted measures and policies are precisely opposed to the more conservative social sectors, and as a result those currents and groups which look to them for support are losing ground.

Do they exist? Undoubtedly, since Cuba is not in the world alone. But more and more, these tendencies have to count on foreign support, which in turn is reflected internally in men and sectors of similar minds and interests.

In international politics, the differences between basic tendencies show up especially in relation to the Latin American Revolution. Not long ago Che Guevara told *El Moujahid,* the organ of the Algerian FLN, that the Latin American Revolution was his "favorite theme." Inside the Cuban leadership, the Minister of Industry undoubtedly represents the position which is frankly oriented toward "expanding the influence of the Revolution," as he said at the recent international congress of architects in Havana.

But this orientation cannot but clash with the foreign policy needs of the Soviet Union. In accordance with its nuclear pact with the United States, the Soviet Union has no interest in changes in the status quo in Latin America. Such changes could provoke as violent a North American reaction as that of October 1962, and threaten the whole prospect of peaceful coexistence and "the construction of communism in twenty years" by means of peaceful competition with the West.

This line of the Soviet leadership has, as it always did, its representatives in Cuba. They are the same old ones, but they have been joined by several new layers of functionaries who enjoy a standard of living superior to the average and who want a quiet life.

The Sino-Soviet dispute neither antedates nor follows this situation but runs parallel to it. That is why the Cuban position—as in some cases the Chinese—does not arise from a programmatic decision of Fidel Castro but partly from an accomplished fact of the Revolution and partly from an irreversible

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and uncontainable domestic pressure. And there is nothing which can hold this pressure in check.

Nevertheless, the argument between the Chinese and Soviet Communist Parties has introduced a new element. Despite Cuban declarations of "neutrality," the dispute each day carries greater weight in the inner evolution of the Cuban leadership and the future prospect of the Revolution.

Hundreds of conversations with soldiers, workers, farmers, students, army officials, office employees, have shown me that sympathy for the Chinese is general in Cuba. As a consequence, the leadership of the Revolution can declare, as it has up to now, that it is neutral; but it could not, if it wanted to, take a stand against the Chinese, for that would collide directly with public opinion. Anyone in Cuba who wished to bring such a clash to a head would not find a social sector sufficiently strong nor sufficiently independent to lean on. That is the way the Cuban Revolution looks from below and not from above.

But neither can the Revolution remain static. On the contrary, it is constantly changing. That is why, as the fight between the Soviet Union and China intensifies and takes in all aspects of the policy of the socialist countries, it becomes each day more difficult for Cuba to maintain her balance.

Cuba needs her trade with the Soviet Union. The blockade and the aggressions are daily occurrences. Cuba's dependence on the developing Latin American situation is great. Domestic pressure is enormous. A perspective of economic self-sufficiency is unthinkable. The sectors interested in "stabilizing" the Revolution have been losing their social base with recent measures dealing with the countryside, with the provisioning of the population, and with the structure of wages. The general social climate in the island also works against them. The hurricane's effects have not disheartened the Cubans; these new difficulties have contributed to a greater hatred of the blockade, a more intense conviction that for Cuba there is no coexistence and no way out inside the confines of the island.

The destruction caused by the hurricane can only postpone a little the basic decisions the Revolution must face, but the postponement also makes them more explosive. In its economy, investments, international policy, and in its unions, Cuba faces

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two major roads and several minor alternatives which branch off from them. These fundamental choices have begun to show up in the leadership, although in public the differences are not clearly defined. In this chapter we have tried to uncover the internal and foreign forces which support and also propel them. Within each trend there are various shadings and tendencies, but at bottom the alternatives are objective, as are the forces and reality which determine them.

We have tried to show the connections which exist between different problems and between different answers to apparently separate questions. These are the means for gauging the pace and direction of the Cuban Revolution's next steps. A foreign and domestic necessity ineluctably leads it, independently of any leader's will, toward Latin America and China.

Which step will come first and which later is impossible to predict. Nor can we say what internal crises must be overcome. But only the deluded or beguiled can fail to see the direction of the road which has been entered upon. For them the Cuban Revolution is preparing new surprises, new disillusionments, new blows, and new comic roles to play. For, as the saying goes, he who has no brains to look ahead should have broad shoulders to endure.

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CHAPTER 2

National and International Planning

The central planning body in Cuba, which corresponds to the Gosplan of the USSR, is the *Junta Central de Planificación* (Juceplan). It projects and develops the Cuban economy's long-range and annual plans. Until now the annual plan's figures have been little more than approximations, not simply because of Cuba's lack of planning experience but primarily because of uncertainty about the objectives of the plan and the perspectives of economic construction which have varied in successive years.

One of the factors which contributes to this instability has been the absence during the working out of the plans of an important stabilizing and regulating influence: the participation of the people themselves. In this, Cuba has followed the methods of the Soviet Union where the plan is viewed as an economic program which the leadership develops from on high and in which the base only participates in a formal and limited way.

The technical-economic nature of the decisions which the plan requires is the reason given for the methods used, since these decisions are beyond the grasp of the average man. In Cuba, the practice is for the broad lines of the plan to be developed by the revolutionary government in discussions behind closed doors. Then each ministry works out its own plan and the plans for its enterprises, all within the limits set. In turn, the enterprises discuss their individual plans and return them back up the line to their respective ministries. From there, the plans return to Juceplan and, on the basis of all these actions, the government gives definitive form to the central plan. Broadly speaking, that is the procedure.

Under this scheme, participation by the workers in de-

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veloping the plan theoretically occurs at the factory level. We are told that only at this point can there be knowledgeable discussions and proposals, for the problems being dealt with arise from the day-to-day workings of the enterprise—problems which are not evident when the broad lines of the plan are being worked out.

In reality, what happens is quite different. The workers in general show little interest in discussing the production plan. Since such discussions are confined to their place of work, the plan appears to them as a complete abstraction. They can discuss and get to know a tiny arc of the curve, but they cannot judge the curve as a whole. Under these conditions, they cannot even feel qualified to judge the small arc assigned to them. They can discuss how much they will produce at such and such cost, but that kind of discussion certainly does not appeal to them. They feel they are learning absolutely nothing and have been asked to decide on nothing of any importance: they have been called to a purely schematic consultation paternalistically designed to arouse their interest.

Consequently, they do not respond to calls for "production rallies." This is their indirect way of expressing discontent and protesting the methods used, while defenders of the system consider their lack of response conclusive proof that the workers do not understand and are not interested in planning problems and that their only concern is their wages. Here we meet one more argument purporting to prove the necessity of interesting workers in production by means of material incentives. It is disconcerting to those in the leadership who are opposed to this point of view, for they feel the workers have abandoned them. They do not realize that in accepting a "consultative" role for workers in the plan they are in a way representing the point of view of "material incentives," and that the workers do not show interest in the economic plan because they do not like the paternal way in which it is presented to them.

Nevertheless, the question of figures and proportions central to the plan is basic in Cuba, as in any socialist country, and the population should become interested and participate in it to the greatest extent. Is this participation possible without specialized technical knowledge? Actually, the decision about the

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fundamental proportions of the plan is not a technical-economic problem but above all a political problem. And since this is so, it is the people who should decide what they want.

With the state owning the essential means of production, the main problems the plan must decide are: (1) What shall be the proportion between capital accumulation (investments, education, infrastructure, etc.) and the consumption fund (salaries, wages, pensions, etc.) in a given period? In other words, what part of current output is destined for reinvestment and what part for consumption by the population? (2) How is capital investment to be distributed among the different sectors of the economy (industry and agriculture, productive and unproductive investments, etc.)? (3) How should the consumption fund be distributed among the different categories of the population (workers, office employees, farmers, functionaries)? (4) By what means will the people and the state be able to correct the plan once it is under way (since all plans are no more than working hypotheses which need to be verified, corrected, or rectified as they are applied)?

In a capitalist country, all these proportions are blindly decided by the play of the market in which the monopolies, the state, the class struggle, the world market, etc., all play a part. In a state with a nationalized and planned economy, these proportions are fixed by the state beforehand as well as during the course of the plan, taking into account all the forces which impinge upon the economy but relying on the plan as the essential lever of intervention and direction.

These proportions are never fixed according to abstract technical principles but primarily in response to political considerations. For example, every increase in capital investment at the expense of consumption means a present sacrifice for a future gain. How far such sacrifices (which up to a certain point are indispensable) are acceptable and desirable are questions which can only be answered in political terms. In the same way, if the leadership of the state foresees a long stage of peaceful international coexistence, it will decide to increase consumption at the expense of investment; while if it believes that invasion or war is inevitable within a certain period, it will decide

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differently. In both cases, the decision is political, not simply economic.

These, and not the quantity of bolts or shovels to be produced, are precisely the political questions which the Cuban people discuss passionately, unceasingly, every day. If they could give their views without any leader accusing them of being "counter-revolutionary" or "divisionist" whenever their opinions happen to differ from those of the leadership, if they had representative bodies or spokesmen to make their opinions known and to debate and decide on these questions, they would be setting the guide lines of the plan and they would know it. Then, seeing and having their own opinion of the whole curve, the individual workers would find a meaning to the small segments which are their own enterprises' plans and would participate in them with an enthusiasm unknown under present conditions.

Otherwise, production meetings will continue to be generally ignored, and the Technical Consulting Councils (workers' councils elected to participate in an advisory capacity in the technical management of each enterprise and to assist the director appointed by the state) will continue to be a fiction, a phantom which exists on paper, or will stop functioning altogether as has already happened in most Cuban enterprises.

Today the Cuban population does not yet take part in the solution of fundamental problems of economic planning, except by diffuse social pressure. Having said this, I must insist once more that the Cuban government's decisions reflect the workers' interests infinitely more than does the economy of any capitalist country. This is so because it is a revolutionary state which makes the decisions and this state has no interests to defend of any class antagonistic to the workers' state.

No tendency has appeared in the Cuban leadership to advocate the kind of self-management found in Yugoslavia and Algeria. The rightist tendency which defends material incentives has no liking for self-management in so far as it means, even though very indirectly, important participation by the workers in the leadership—and the rightists understand that, given the climate of the Cuban Revolution, self-management would be interpreted and applied by the masses primarily in this

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sense, rather than as an aspect of a system of material incentives.

On the other hand, the tendency which defends centralization sees, with reason, that self-management in Yugoslavia—and even in Algeria—means weakening the state's centralized direction of the economy and strengthens the principle of material incentives.

The revolutionary impulse from below which in other countries has given rise to self-management—independently of its later use by the state leadership—in Cuba concentrated first of all on nationalizing the enterprises and on the consequent socialist transformation of the economy. In effect, self-management arose in Yugoslavia from the necessity, among other things, of the Titoist leadership to obtain the support of the masses in its conflict with Stalin. It was a measure which started with widespread participation by the workers in running the economy; but since it was not followed by workers' participating in the political life of the country, it was rapidly deflected and turned into its present function: decentralization of the economy and semi-competition between the state enterprises.

In Poland, the workers' councils also arose primarily as a political act, not as a desire to participate in the economic and technical leadership of the enterprises. They appeared in 1956 to support the "Polish October" when the workers of Warsaw occupied the factories for three days until the defeat of the Stalinist faction in the Central Committee of the Communist Party was assured and the new leadership of Gomulka established. Later, the Gomulka leadership itself began restricting the political role of the councils, altering their composition and electoral forms, and above all keeping them from doing more than simply administering the enterprises, so that little by little the workers withdrew their interest and support.

In Algeria, self-management began when the workers occupied the enterprises and ran them themselves; it was their way of demanding nationalization and the establishment of a proletarian state based on a nationalized economy. But, unlike the Cuban leaders, Ben Bella's group did not accept or direct this force to end capitalism immediately, but deflected it toward its present form of self-management, conceived primarily, as in

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Yugoslavia, as a structure for economic administration of the enterprises on the principle of material interests and market competition but with the difference that in Algeria, unlike in Yugoslavia, the workers' power in the state has yet to be established.

In Cuba, the trend toward participation by the workers came out into the open during the wave of occupation of enterprises in 1960; these occupations were the basis of the later nationalizations decreed by the revolutionary government and the consequent transformation of Cuba into a proletarian state. The spontaneous wave of occupations started from below. The team around Fidel Castro accepted the pressure of the masses and went ahead on the socialist road, though until then it had not conceived of such a development nor included it in its program. The movement was not deflected by the leaders into a system of factory-by-factory self-management within the still capitalist structure of the state and the market. Rather, it became definitively centered in the establishment of a new type of state the basis for which had already been prepared by previous struggle, the downfall of Batista, and the destruction of the old army. The Cuban masses found a leadership sensitive to their desires and initiatives, and they advanced along the road of nationalization which transformed the revolution into a socialist one, a result which the leaders had not consciously proposed beforehand.*

* It is hardly necessary to repeat that this transformation was neither prepared nor foreseen by the Cuban Communists. On the contrary, they considered it an adventure and opposed it in 1959 and 1960. As late as August 21, 1960, at the high tide of nationalizations which culminated in the decrees of October, Blas Roca said at the Eighth Congress of the PSP: "The revolution is not communist but anti-imperialist and anti-latifundist. . . . The historical tasks present in the revolution, by their economic and social content, are anti-imperialist, national-liberationist, anti-latifundist, progressive, popular, and democratic. The social classes which are objectively interested in the realization of these historical tasks are the workers, farmers, the middle class of the city, and the national bourgeoisie." A few weeks after this "orientation," the government of Fidel Castro, under the wave of occupations of enterprises and demonstrations which were liquidating the national bourgeoisie, dictated the historical decrees of October which abolished in Cuba the foundations of this social class, "objectively interested," according to Blas Roca, in the Revolution. Here too the position of the PSP went directly against the development of the Revolution.

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This drive from below took place in the context of general confidence by the Cuban workers in Fidel Castro and his team. And since this team responded by decreeing the nationalizations and advancing along the socialist road, the drive became focused on the establishment of the new state. The workers felt that through the medium of these decrees they were participating in the basic decisions; and they lavished all their ardor on the leadership of the state headed by Fidel Castro who carried on a firm struggle against imperialism, responding to initiatives from below. In this situation, no pressing need was felt for committees of the type, for example, that had been formed in Poland. It is not that there was not a trend to set up such committees but that they did not present themselves at that moment as the central problem. The state felt the people's will directly and launched it into the daily struggle against imperialism. And the workers understood that their destiny—which includes their standard of living—is not decided at the level of the enterprise, but at the level of national politics.

The pressure and intervention of the Cuban masses has always tended to exert itself directly on Fidel Castro and the leadership of the state. In the last analysis, the leaders uphold the trend to centralization of the economy, a trend which is an expression of the masses' pressure to participate directly in basic economic decisions. The people express this indirectly because the leaders do not provide institutions which would permit a more direct participation. This is a task for the future. Thus Che Guevara, defending centralization from the point of view of modern techniques, said in December 1962: "The action of men in modern, centralized, automated industries should take place outside production. In the future, the will of men will express itself through political bodies which are being created and which will then determine the types of production that are needed for the country."*

Just as there has not appeared in the Cuban leadership any tendency—at least openly—that proposes self-management, neither has there appeared any which looks to the development of those bodies which in a socialist democracy express the will of

* See Appendix, "The Centralization of Industry."—Translator.

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the people: soviets, workers' councils, unions independent of the state, etc. All this works against planning and multiplies and prolongs the errors the leadership can commit—and, as the leaders themselves have acknowledged several times, they can make errors.

The masses not only lack political institutions through which to express their opinions and decide on the proportions and the structure of the economic plan; they also have no means for correcting the plan while it is being applied, or for pointing out errors which have come to light, or disproportions in time. For this reason, errors, when corrected, have already been influencing the course of events much longer than necessary, with resultant minor crises in this or that sector and all the wastage a crisis always means. The leadership simply lacks the means to discover for itself what had been known by whole sectors of the working population. To cite examples, there were the errors committed in the wholesale liquidation of large estates during the first period of the Revolution; the error of clearing enormous areas of cane that later had to be recultivated; and the more elementary errors of bad location of factories, installations, cultivation, etc. None of these were seen from the offices of the plan; yet the workers and farmers pointed them out in criticism and comments which did not—and still do not—have the means of reaching the top with decisive influence.

The situation in the unions likewise affects good planning. In a centralized economy like Cuba's, the plan is not submitted to the market, but it is fulfilled by means of the market. And it is the market, the intervention of the state, and the play of social forces—not only the original figures of the plan—that decide in what proportion the consumption fund is distributed among the different categories of the population.

Although the plan fixes these proportions in broad lines and the state controls them by setting prices and wages, it is then the play of the market—both official and non-official markets—that gives them definitive form.

The producing farmer plays his part in the market with the prices of his products, and he has many ways of setting these prices, not only by means of the free market but also by increasing or decreasing production. In this way, he has his say in

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determining the consumption fund, and he defends and tries to increase his share even though the latter has apparently been fixed *a priori* on paper by the plan.

For their part, the state functionaries are represented by the state itself, not only because it fixes their salaries but also because of the permanent pressure the bureaucratic sectors exert to increase their share by "invisible" means—these may be a series of privileges which go with the job or which are added on arbitrarily: automobiles, apartments, trips, meals, etc.

Lastly, the working class—which is by definition the pillar of the proletarian state—should have unions as the normal means of protecting its share of the consumption fund as it is influenced by the market and the play of social forces. This economic function of the unions is a necessity so long as a market economy still exists and wages are a means of apportionment. This function for the unions has not disappeared in Cuba, but the way they operate does paralyze them or keep them in many cases from doing this job; they thus minimize the proletariat's ability to intervene in the distribution of the consumption fund.

Theoretically, it is the state itself which protects the rights of the workers as consumers. But practice from the Russian Revolution to the Cuban has shown, first, that unions are needed to deal with the state; and second, that the state in the day-to-day play of social forces first defends the position and immediate concrete economic interests of functionaries, the state itself, the party, and the union bureaucracy. It must be added, however, that the state has also demonstrated its willingness to defend the historic interests of the proletarian regime, even after institutions like the soviets ceased to exist.

Within the framework of the revolutionary state, bureaucratic interests are counterposed to the interests of the workers in such matters as the proportions in which the consumption fund is distributed. Moreover, except when direct control by the workers exists, which can only occur politically, the proportions between consumption and investment—and the proportions within the latter—also tend to be resolved by the state bureaucracy guided by the pressure of its own interests as a socially defined group, deciding of course according to what benefits it most. We are not saying that this is a conscious and

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deliberate attitude; what matters is that here too existence determines consciousness.

None of these problems is publicly discussed in Cuba. Nevertheless, they are there in life, tied to the problems of international politics which are closely allied with economic decisions. And economic decisions are at the bottom of all discussions of planning.

In entering the socialist camp, Cuba gave an impulse to an evolving process common to all these countries: the pressure and struggle of the masses to intervene directly in the leadership of the state. This struggle takes apparently contradictory forms. In China, it takes the form of the communes, in the Soviet Union of the struggle against Stalinism and its scions. In Hungary and Poland, it appeared as the workers' councils and the resistance to subjection to the interests of the Soviet Union's leaders. The leaders—Khrushchev, Kadar, Gomulka—try to deflect this process and guide it into their own policy channels, but they cannot ignore it, negate it, or turn it back. As it keeps getting stronger and its forms interweave, primarily in China and the Soviet Union, the leaders will neither be able to deflect it nor mold it as they have until now. The process itself, part of the revolution of our epoch, will end by imposing itself and setting up its own leaders.

Cuba is part of all this. The Cuban Revolution was already born under the sign of this process and accelerated it by its appearance, its methods, and by the participation of its people, which from the very first moment gave the Revolution its vigor and freshness—and continues to do so. In its turn, Cuba has been influenced by the bureaucratic methods and the non-participation of workers which exist in other socialist countries. In the continuing contradiction between these trends, however, it is the pressure from below which is decisive at each point and it ends by imposing itself, thus further broadening the path of the Cuban Revolution itself.

In the field of economic planning, this contradiction shows up on both the domestic and international planes. It has taken different forms, one of them being the struggle between, on the one hand, the policy of subordinating the economy of the new socialist states to the interests of the Soviet Union and on

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the other hand the policy of international, equalitarian planning by all the socialist countries. New steps have been taken in the name of "the international socialist division of labor," and they are a consequence of two things in the socialist countries, particularly those of Eastern Europe: first, the social and productive forces will no longer accept the Stalinist method of subordinating their economies to that of the Soviet Union; and second, the autocratic methods of planning in each country.

Nevertheless, the "international socialist division of labor" is far from being the result of international or equalitarian planning. It is in reality an accommodation of the economies of the countries of Eastern Europe to that of the Soviet Union, a rational division of work, an agreement between different plans; but it is still separate planning with the borders of each country essentially maintained. The relations among the different economies are basically commercial. The ruling and determining factor in their mutual relations is world market prices. Within each country the pressure of the world market penetrates by means of the play of the market and the working of the law of value, but the state by means of the plan does intervene, regulate, control, and alter these two forces.

If you consider the socialist countries and the relations existing among them as a unit, this latter type of intervention is enormously diminished, for Comecon (Council of Mutual Economic Aid) is more of a coordinating body than a planning one, and it covers only a part of the socialist camp. Thus, the pressure of the capitalist world market penetrates it the more easily. This pressure enters not only because there is no common planning and because the socialist countries' commercial relations are inevitably based on world market prices (which the economies of the advanced capitalist countries still dominate). There is the further fact that each socialist country does business on its own with the capitalist countries and, when its government thinks it convenient, opposes such business to business with socialist countries, playing the two off against each other. (It must be said in passing that in Yugoslavia self-management introduces this kind of competition into the very heart of the working-class state.) Since economic relations among socialist countries are predominantly commercial and since each govern-

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ment and its leadership has its own interests—based on its economy, from which it takes its part of the national product as its "material incentive"—these interests tend to express themselves in commercial forms. Consequently, the pressure and influence of world capitalism are given a favorable field in which to find temporary allies in the leadership of one workers' state in opposition to other workers' states. The alliance is based on mutual interests which, despite their different and opposed social bases, have found a common ground of understanding. In the socialist world, this situation is a bad hangover from the past and a reflection of capitalism's existence in the present.

The alternative would be centralized international planning by all the socialist countries: a single plan, composed of different national plans fitted into the overall plan but corresponding to the interests and the needs of the whole. Certainly Lenin would never have imagined that after the establishment of socialist governments in fourteen countries there would still be fourteen different plans and fourteen economies separated by national frontiers, united only by a simple "division of labor."

Not technical lacks but political problems stand in the way of a single plan. It is obvious, for example, that the policy of peaceful coexistence with the capitalist world does not allow central and unified planning by all the socialist countries, for one of the rules of coexistence is to permit and, up to a certain point, even to welcome the penetration of commercial competition in the socialist camp. The capitalist world demands this as a condition, and at the same time—with reason—would consider unified planning a massive, centralized block raised as a direct threat to its survival and would react accordingly.

Cuba has joined this system of socialist countries in transition, but with certain characteristics of its own. At present, its fundamental planning lines are subordinated to this international division of labor because foreign commerce is crucial to its economy. And, despite the reservations or differences its leadership (or part of it) has about peaceful coexistence, it has to go along with it generally. On the other hand, all their discussions and theoretical writings have taken this international division of labor as a point of departure. At no time have they raised the question of international centralized planning.

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It is unlikely that this alternative has not entered the minds of what we call "the centralizing trend." The logical development of their position should be the single, centralized international plan, to be worked out by an organization representing all the socialist countries. The influence of foreign commerce and the world market on the Cuban economy (as on its international policy) naturally leads them to see planning problems in international terms. But given the cryptic and allusive way in which discussions develop in Cuba—at least outside the most restricted group of leaders—it is impossible to imagine that anyone would come out and propose such an alternative, even theoretically, in the near future.

Yet just the thought of such a perspective as a possibility—whether expressed or not—explains the real basis for many polemics and discussions. These discussions seem otherwise abstract, byzantine, and even lacking in importance, for the opposed groups have displayed a tenacity and passion out of proportion to the points under dispute.

The development of the Sino-Soviet dispute, or the domestic situation in the Soviet Union or Czechoslovakia or East Germany, or the incorporation of new countries in the socialist system, would allow these problems to be raised in concrete terms, for the discussion is really not economic but political. And the protagonists, the forces which will finally decide its outcome, are not the names now at the top; it is the great masses, still without means for organized discussion, who will decide by their actions which courses the leadership can follow and which it cannot.

This is why it is futile to represent the discussion on planning or the problems of Cuban planning merely as technical problems, as questions of "revolutionary common sense." It is just as futile to explain Cuba's position in the "international socialist division of labor" by its being a sugar producer, or to explain the proportion between industry and agriculture or any other aspect of the plan by historical or even economic conditions, by the play of the world market, or by the action of the law of value. All these considerations are relevant, but their roles can be assessed only when it is understood that the fundamental decisions are political. Understanding this means looking

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at the situation right side up, for it allows us to see that all these economic or technical discussions are but the inverted and distorted reflection of the basic political problems that face the Cuban Revolution and the entire socialist camp. This was the method of analysis of Marx and Lenin, although it may not be that of many "Marxist-Leninists" of today.

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CHAPTER 3

Cuba in October

"To Arms!" A red poster showing a civilian holding a machine gun on high and three words in large white letters, *"A Las Armas!"*, appeared on all the streets of Havana on Tuesday, October 23, 1962. For eighteen hours Cuba had been on a war footing. Kennedy had issued his threat of invasion and Fidel Castro had called a general mobilization.

The poster—one color, three words, one gesture—summed up the instantaneous reaction of the Cuban people. From that moment until the end of the October crisis, these people were the protagonists of one of the great moments of this century, and they set down for history one of the high points in humanity's developing self-confidence.

It was as if a long-contained tension relaxed, as if the whole country had said as one: "At last!" The long wait for invasion, the war of nerves, the sneak attacks, the landing of spies, the blockade—all this was past. Now was the hour of struggle and everyone threw himself into it body and soul.

It is difficult to imagine the harmony, the unanimity, the fervor that a people can reach in such moments. All Cuba said "To arms," and took them up. Journalism, propaganda, bureaucratic slowness, routine—all that was put aside. Cuba was one man and his rifle.

On the 23rd, the army and all the militia were mobilized. The combat companies of the militia started for the interior. The companies of popular defense spread out over Havana. Many thousands of men and women who had not been in the militia until then volunteered and started training. Cuba was a military camp on a war footing.

For all Cuba had a collective goal: to face the invasion and defend the Revolution which was in danger. And in those

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crucial days the Cuban people learned things about themselves which they had not known before.

There was not the slightest fear or alarm. Alarmism is an expression of insecurity and fear, and it shows itself in a thousand ways: one way, for example, is to run to buy groceries for the family. But in Cuba there was none of this. It simply did not occur to anyone to think about himself or his family as something separate from the collective destiny. In the face of the direct, immediate threat of invasion by the most powerful military nation in the world only ninety miles away, who in this little island of seven million was going to run for groceries?

All individualism, all family interests, all private solutions were annulled and absorbed by the magnitude of the approaching struggle. But it was not only that; in Cuba, as in other great moments in history, the whole population had a common objective. They saw everything clearly; the struggle was defined and stripped to its essentials; petty politics were brushed aside and all was clean and pure: our rifles against theirs. When a people can see the world at gun point, it looks clear and simple.

The Cuban Revolution is a daily fervor. Despite internal problems and privilege-seekers, despite those who try to set themselves over the workers, despite the counter-revolutionaries disguised as bureaucrats, revolutionary fervor still permeates life in Cuba and lends its tone and color to everything. Even after five years of Revolution. But in the October days that fervor reached a purity free of all dross. The best facets of the human soul—generosity, fraternity, equality—cast their undimmed light on the struggle and the Revolution, and the whole country, facing annihilation, left aside all that is limited, private, egoistical, and separate from the collective destinies of the country and all humanity. Cuba lived those days not as a country which defends its own existence but as a part of humanity fighting for its future. And it lived them to the full. No one ever will be able to erase that experience from the memory and soul of the Cuban people, nor from humanity's.

The immensity of the threat—rubbing the island off the map with atomic bombs—was meant to terrorize the Cuban people and inspire such desperation that they would be prostrate, defenseless, paralyzed when the invasion came. You had to be

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in Cuba to know at first hand what the United States threat to use atomic bombs meant. And no one in Cuba doubted that the attack, the invasion, and the bombing were coming.

But the very magnitude of the threat had the opposite effect. Those who flaunted the bombs did not know—and still do not—the forces they aroused. The reaction of the Cuban people was not to defend the family, the home, or the children. It was not the response of people who leave it to the state and then occupy themselves only with saving their homes and families. Theirs was not at all the reaction to an ordinary war.

The Cuban people felt that they were defending their new life, their collective existence, and all it had conquered and discovered: equality, fraternity, the word *compañero,* that newfound conviction of being masters of their destinies. They felt—literally, these are not just words—that to lose that life was much worse than to lose physical existence itself. And this feeling brought out from the depth of their individual and collective souls an inexhaustible courage which they had not known was there.

When such feelings come into play, fear does not have a chance. Terrorism fails or, rather, provokes the opposite effect it looked for: it unifies, galvanizes, enkindles.

Moreover, the Cuban people experienced the knowledge that in its hands were the instruments to defend its new life, not in the hands of an alien state or army or some other body. They took to their rifles as only peoples in revolt do. Perhaps a rifle is a useless weapon with which to face a nuclear bomb, but a man and his rifle, a people and their rifles, are something else. It is not bombs but men who in the end decide. Humanity acts as a collective in moments of crisis and gauges situations by concrete collective symbols. Having the rifles and joining the militia gave a feeling of real participation to everyone facing the struggle together. In his rifle or machine gun each felt he was carrying part of the collective destiny. There was no waiting with empty hands for a battle that others decide some place where one cannot intervene: in Cuba everyone felt he had the means with which to decide the outcome. The waiting had gone on before, when the attack did not come, when one lived with the vague threat of blockade and harassment.

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Now the waiting had ended and each Cuban, arms in hand and at battle quarters, had entered into a new struggle, a new life, whose fullness and exaltation had been unknown before. That is how Cuba lived from the 23rd to the 27th of October. It rained during those days. The militia did their exercises in the rain after work. They would come home full of enthusiasm, sopping wet and happy. In the factories, produtions increased. Everywhere, life was centered on preparations for battle.

And everywhere everyone discovered not just that he was not afraid but that his wife, his neighbor, his fellow worker were not afraid either. The atomic terror could not find a hole in which to stick its snout.

What made this difference? That the Cuban people had—as if in their very hands—something to fight for, that they had, as well, the instruments and the organization to fight together. The people had the whole country in their hands and they knew it.

The world press reported that there were thirteen and fourteen year old pickets in the United States who carried posters during those days that said: "We are too young to die." In Cuba thirteen and fourteen year olds carried rifles or manned anti-aircraft guns or commanded tanks. From them, as from everyone, radiated the feeling of collective security in themselves. All Cuba lived in the same climate which witnesses to the first weeks of the Spanish Revolution saw in 1936 in Madrid and Barcelona: fervor, fraternity, generosity without limits, and a new sense of life. That is why Cuba held its ground and the invasion failed.

Talking to people those days, it was clear that all counted on the support of the Soviet Union, the socialist countries, and the peoples of the entire world. But at the same time everyone had the clear feeling that one did not have to depend on this support, that the defense of Cuba depended on Cuba itself.

Moreover, in those October days no one in Cuba even thought of the confrontation as war between the United States on one side and Cuba and the Soviet Union on the other. Everyone saw the attack on Cuba not only as the start of a world war

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but of a war entwined with world revolution. Cuba literally felt itself part of humanity.

This evened up the unequal fight. It brought with it a feeling which arose from life itself, and this was the basis of Cuba's strength. Had they reasoned in strictly Cuban terms, in a narrow nationalist sense, the "normal" effect would have been the appearance of strong pressure to negotiate. Given the disproportionate forces and the fact that even with Soviet intervention Cuba could still be swept by atomic bombs, it was to be expected that many people would call for negotiation: better, they could have argued, to give in and save one's life than not to and lose the entire nation's as well. What was at stake was not just one's life or one's family's but all life on the island, for the threat meant concretely that it would be converted into an island of radioactive ashes.

Nevertheless, the reaction of the Cuban people went beyond all this. Not that they were ignorant of the danger. They were perfectly aware, and you could hear it in daily conversations everywhere. But the Cuban people also felt that the destiny of all humanity was at stake. They had collectively weighed this without anyone having to tell them to.

It was concretely phrased by a comment which with slight variations I heard many times those days in the streets of Havana: "Perhaps we will all die here. It doesn't matter. We will win the world this time for sure." When an entire people rises above its daily cares and its own individual limitations to reach such a degree of collective heroism, it is proof that humanity can develop forces heretofore unknown and is capable of transmuting daily life into the heroic: it can suppress the hero and replace him with the masses. No atomic terror can destroy this, and Cuba—not quite seven million dealing with a giant—thus proved it to itself and to the whole world during those days.

The atomic attack would have left ruins, disorganized everything, and would have physically accomplished everything predicted. There is no doubt about that. Nonetheless, this internal solidarity could have been shaken but never destroyed by atomic attack. It is the only cement that could resist it and later bind together what remained.

Cuba in October contains an immensely important ex-

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perience for the world; it has yet to be basically analyzed, at least publicly, by the leaders of either camp. What is interesting in such an analysis is not how the military mechanism functioned, but the human one. October in Cuba remains the only social experience approximating atomic war, not under the conditions of the Second World War as happened in Japan, but in the new situation of a war between two social systems which are different and antagonistic but which are similarly armed.

Arms can be tried out in laboratories. You can also experiment with atom bomb explosions. But there can be no laboratory experiment of the social reaction to a real and immediate threat of atomic attack as a total social experience. Cuba in October came close to a type of experience which in a certain way was also the case with the 1905 Revolution in Russia. Yet 1905 created an extensive literature with which the party of Lenin prepared itself for the conquest of power, while Cuba in October has produced a very limited literature from a political point of view. Most of the commentaries are simply journalistic or literary, propagandistic in one sense or the other.

The October crisis demonstrated how far the consciousness of the Cuban people has acquired a collective quality different from previous years, and also how completely this consciousness felt as one with that of all the peoples of the world. During the crisis, the people felt free in their conscience, for they could tell that their leaders were holding fast and had decided to fight to the end. The leaders responded to the people's firmness and to their collective decision and became part of them. No wonder the people felt free to act, move ahead, and take their individual positions with concern and care, knowing that all were doing the same that very moment. Facing the worst danger of its history, Cuba lived in a state of the greatest internal, collective self-confidence it has ever felt.

On the 26th and 27th of October, Havana reached its point of greatest tension. Several government leaders were with the army in the interior of the country. The attack was expected on the 27th; Havana timed the first bombardment for the afternoon of that day. It was remarkable to see the city, practically defenseless against a mass aerial attack, wait tensely yet tranquilly and go about its business. I covered Havana that morn-

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ing. Nowhere were there signs of alarm or fear. Paradoxically, only the supposed beneficiaries of the invasion, the counter-revolutionaries, had disappeared or were paralyzed: they had nothing to defend and no way to fight; they could only wait. At one of the more important ministries, I was able to talk to one of the few important functionaries who was there to tend to urgent matters. "We expect the attack this afternoon between three and four," he said to me. It was eleven in the morning. In the elevator, one militiaman said to another that he had not shaved that morning. "It seems it may come at any moment. You won't shave now until after the war." That day the whole country lived in the same climate.

Only on the 29th did Cuba learn of the agreement between Kennedy and Khrushchev. The daily *Revolución* announced it with a headline on page one: "Khrushchev orders missiles withdrawn from Cuba." It also published the text of the exchange of letters between Khrushchev and Kennedy, unknown until then in Cuba, and the dispatches of the news agencies from the start of the crisis until its dénouement, which also had not been published by the Cuban press in previous days. It was obvious that publication was not on the personal initiative of the director of the paper, Carlos Franqui, but on that of the Prime Minister, who in this way defined for the people the degree of his responsibility for the negotiations in which he had not participated.

The reaction was instantaneous. That morning, in every corner of Havana, groups commented indignantly on the withdrawal of the missiles. "Why didn't they consult us since we were the ones who were going to die?" I heard one say. "They betrayed us as in Spain," I heard another. Furious because Cuba had not been consulted and the missiles withdrawn without a fight, people everywhere protested. In Havana, popular opinion always expresses itself during crucial moments in similar, almost identical phrases and arguments simultaneously, from one end of the city to the other, as if a conference had been held or a signal had been given. And yet neither the press, the radio, nor government leaders had uttered a word about this. They had limited themselves to telling the news and gauging the reaction.

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At street corners, factories, the university, people analyzed the published cables line by line and Khrushchev's letters word by word. It was impressive to see such unanimity, without previous discussion or previous agreement; no one approved of Khrushchev's calling Kennedy "respected president" or saying "you and I know well what atomic war means." "Ah yes, and we, we here staking our lives, we don't know it, and that's why they didn't consult us," I heard this comment many times similarly phrased.

All the tension, all the heroism displayed by the Cuban people in previous days now turned into a solid mass of protest against the withdrawal of the missiles. At the University of Havana there were meetings and rallies on the university grounds. From the trenches, the factories, the state farms, and the cities, everyone waited for an official statement from Fidel Castro, announced for the first of November. Fidel Castro personally covered on the 29th and 30th the streets and meeting places of Havana and also saw groups in the trenches. The protests and pressures he heard directly were everywhere the same.

In a Section Committee of the Committees of Defense of the Revolution (the neighborhood organizations of revolutionary neighbors, organized by blocks and then by sections), I listened to explanations by a propaganda team to the section leaders. In summary, a man explained that the agreement was a triumph, that Kennedy had been obliged to promise that he would not invade Cuba, and that Khrushchev's position had saved the peace and inflicted a defeat on imperialism. Those present listened with faces full of skepticism. The speaker added that it was necessary to explain all this to the people and undo the disaster which *Revolución* had provoked by so bluntly publishing the news that Khrushchev had ordered the withdrawal of the missiles. That this information was true and that the paper, for once, had done no more than comply with an elementary duty toward news did not seem to bother the speaker, who in the best style of a functionary of any state anywhere attributed the reaction of the masses to the "maneuvers" of some "confusionists."

I remember that only one person got up to support the speaker. He was an old man. "These are problems of high poli-

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tics," he said, "that are beyond our comprehension. The explanation of this *compañero* is just and we should accept it and transmit it. I remember very well that when the pact between Stalin and Hitler was signed, the same happened as now. Many *compañeros* did not understand and tore up their party cards. And nevertheless that was an act of high politics that allowed the Soviet Union to be better prepared for the Nazi attack." The old Communist had just repeated with complete ingenuousness an old explanation abandoned long ago; in other words, he had mentioned the rope in the home of the hanged. Others present did not seem to know much of what lay behind the German-Soviet pact, but their faces showed that in any case they were not much in agreement with the Kennedy-Khrushchev pact.

Thousands of meetings like this were held all over Cuba. The Cuban people were duly informed, and it was explained and illustrated how the withdrawal of the missiles was a correct and wise measure, and that only counter-revolutionaries, confusionists, and divisionists could be opposed. At many meetings, the audiences listened and remained quiet. At others, they asked questions which were terribly embarrassing to the intermediaries who came to repeat the explanations which had been given them and of which, it must be said, many were not even half convinced themselves. When they were stumped, the answer was: "Well, we have to wait and see what Fidel says."

The people waited to hear what Fidel said. But it did not wait in a vacuum. It waited with an opinion already collectively formed, firm as a stone, with the conviction that Fidel had also come to the same opinion. It was a massive pressure—invisible but everywhere tremendously present—that was exerted on the revolutionary government and Fidel Castro between the 29th and the 31st of October: there had to be protest over the withdrawal of the missiles.

When Fidel Castro spoke and said that there were differences with the Soviet government, there was no question that he could not have said a word less and that this was the minimum statement he could make in response to popular pressure. All Cubans hung on their television sets in homes, public places, in all headquarters of the Committees of Defense. Fidel Castro's

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statement provoked a unanimous outburst in front of all those sets. The same scene, repeated hundreds and thousands of times all over the island: "There it is! What we ourselves said!" The same faces which had listened in silence to all the explanations of the withdrawals of the missiles and Khrushchev's "wisdom" or which had simply expressed doubt now broke out happily: "Fidel gave us the reason!" They felt they had defeated the whole apparatus and all the "explainers," all the intermediaries and leaders who had arrogated to themselves the right to represent them.

With the withdrawal of the missiles, Khrushchev's prestige with the Cuban people fell sharply. They have no means of expressing this change of feelings and that is why the outer forms seem to be maintained. But not a single portrait of Khrushchev is hung anywhere in Cuba except on the initiative of the apparatus, and the portraits of Mao Tse-tung that appeared everywhere were certainly not the apparatus' idea. It is a way of saying: Since I cannot remove Khrushchev's portrait, then I can hang Mao Tse-tung's beside it. And whenever they can find an excuse, Khrushchev's disappears. Besides this, from that moment of the 29th of October, popular verses were born and circulated with dizzying speed all over Havana and the island, all aggressively opposed to Khrushchev for withdrawing the missiles.

When weeks later the missiles actually left Cuba and their long, unmistakable silhouettes passed by in trucks, there were places on the roads of Pinar del Rio where the population turned out into the streets to stop the trucks. *"Tovarisch,"* they said to the Soviet soldiers, "why are you taking them? Why are you leaving? You have to stay and defend Cuba." The soldiers answered that these were orders and tears ran down their faces.

Later, when half-hidden trucks passed through Havana full of Soviet soldiers in civilian clothes who were leaving for good with their suit cases, I saw women, men, and children who happened to be in the street wave goodbye to them, half surprised and moved, some with tears in their eyes.

When Fidel Castro, on the 15th of November, 1962, spoke against the flight of North American planes over Cuba, he

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finished his speech with the statement that Cuba was not defeated "while there remains one man, woman, or child in this land." He was not expressing a mere personal conviction but a decision the Cuban people had collectively taken, in the deepest recesses of their minds and hearts, during the years of its Revolution and irrevocably confirmed in those historic days of October.

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CHAPTER 4

Daily Life: The Revolution and Equality

It is not the relations between men and things (property) which has changed most in Cuba, it is the relations between men themselves. When private capital accumulation was done away with in Cuba, with it went property as an objective of human life, inheritance as its continuer, and family egoism as an exclusive sentiment opposed to social solidarity.

This did not happen all at once. Cuban men and women were born under capitalism. Yet you find that Cubans now frequently look at themselves and comment on how much their thoughts, their mutual relations, their scale of social and individual values have changed.

It is not quite four years since capitalism disappeared from Cuba. But already no Cuban—I refer to the Cuban people, not to that tiny vestigial minority whose eyes are still on the capitalist past and their lost privileges, real or imaginary—even fleetingly thinks of a sugar cane plantation or a factory or a ship as something that can be the property of one person or a group of persons rather than social property. In Cuba, the very idea of this type of private property appears illogical and unnatural.

For the maintenance and functioning of private property, more than those "detachments of armed men" which constitute the state are needed to defend it. Its defense and indeed the very functioning of repressive groups are based on the acceptance of private property by the majority. When the Revolution tears down the old state and nationalizes the means of production, a new concept is formed and affirmed by all, for they have seen that the economy can still function, that private property is not necessary, and that the fruits of production are common property simply because of their social function. In turn,

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social life is organized around collective property. The meaning of the state and of the people's relation to the state changes, for it now defends that property which belongs to all and not the old property which belonged to some only. Just as feudal servitude which once "was the natural order of things" is today unacceptable to the human mind in capitalist countries, so is private ownership of a factory or plantation unacceptable, even unimaginable, to a contemporary Cuban. No force or argument can justify private property to him on the basis of some right, when what is at issue is something social, something which produces for society, and functions because many men work it collectively and lend their physical and mental capacities to make it operate and serve.

This change has occurred in four years. That is why it would be necessary to do more than invade and occupy the island to restore capitalism in Cuba. Every Cuban would have to be liquidated and the invaders would have to start anew with another people.

This is at the base of all social relations in Cuba, at the root of its daily life. But not only this. For at the same time the newly-conquered world is not stable. On the horizon of Havana stands the permanent silhouette of a United States battleship, watching the port, a reminder of the blockade and the constant threat of invasion, a reminder that what has been conquered is in danger. Defense, the permanent alert, the sense of living at war, defending one's life, is present in every minute of a Cuban's life, in each act of social life.

The battleship is not the only hostile presence. Cuba must construct and live. It must do business, export and import, and do it in a world where capitalism exists and is economically strong. Even in its commerce with socialist countries, which is the major part of its commerce, Cuba must do business at world market prices and on the basis of exchange relations which are essentially capitalist relations. By this means, capitalism—the old regime—tries to penetrate and influence and change the new life. That Cubans view the economy as a battlefield is not a simple propaganda slogan: it is part of the struggle to defend their new social regime.

Until now, the battle has apparently been defensive. But

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in the minds of the Cuban people, neither military defense nor the economy are separated from politics. In fact, it is politics which dominates everything. And politics is first of all international. At that point the battle stops being defensive. The intense feeling of participation Cubans have in the revolutionary struggles of other countries arises from the feeling that they are defending their own Revolution and from their daily knowledge that the world is a unity and that the Cuban Revolution can only survive by advancing abroad. Subjected to commercial relations with the capitalist countries or with socialist countries fundamentally on the basis of world market prices, the Revolution is weak. Sustained by the extension of the Revolution in other countries, by the prospect of new socialist revolutions, the Revolution feels itself strong.

That is why, blockaded, Cuba does not have the psychology of a blockaded or isolated country. There is no basis for comparison with the situation of the Soviet Union in the 1920s. Not only because a whole system of socialist countries exists but primarily because the forces that maintain the Cuban Revolution—the world Revolution—are generally on the offensive. That is the other part of daily life of Cuba: on the one hand, there is no private property; on the other, Cuba is part of a Revolution that goes on and can only end by triumphing in the whole world.

This explains why the dominant preoccupation of the Cuban people is not construction but revolution. They build but in a certain sense they build for revolution. When leaders and functionaries want to inculcate the idea that they must construct because the Revolution *per se* has attained its objectives, the masses do not understand and reject the idea. Instead, in the name of the Revolution which continues—not in Cuba alone—and as part of this developing Revolution, they accept any sacrifice and any task.

Collective property is part of the basis of the attitude of the Cuban people's dedication and their voluntary and collective work. That the survival of this common property is tied to the Revolution forms, nevertheless, the principal part of the Cubans' attitude. And it is the Revolution which unites and attracts because it makes each one feel a participant. Everyone

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has attained and given an objective to his life, and this objective is common and collective: it gives to the Cuban Revolution and the Cuban state its solidity. Without this, the difficulties, the blockade, the internal counter-revolution, and the invasion would long ago have liquidated it. This attitude, on the other hand, acts as a true "deterrent" to the invasion, contains it, and forces it to wait.

That the Revolution gives a collective objective to peoples' lives is not a Cuban phenomenon only: it is Algerian, Chinese, Zanzibarian—wherever the revolutionary process acts as a unifier. But in Cuba it is particularly clear without the distractions of private property and the personal interests that go with it.

Merchandise, plantations, factories, buses—all are part of the Revolution and belong to all. And in the same way that the attitude of man to man has changed—both unified by a common end and no longer separated by the individual goal of making money—so the attitude toward things also changes. When a bus is property of an enterprise or of the capitalist state—*their* state—one does not pay much attention if the driver mistreats it. After you have been in Cuba a short time, you find yourself reacting instinctively if the driver does not treat the bus well: "What is he doing?" That is because the bus is now ours, like everything else.

In the family, at the dinner table, in gatherings in one way or the other, the Revolution and collective property are the center of attention. And they are more and more each day displacing personal perspectives untied to collective development. This has not been imposed by education or propaganda: it happens because that is how social functioning is organized by collective property.

The energies, concerns, and attention which in capitalist countries are dedicated to furthering one's individual career or to the political or trade union struggle against capitalism, in Cuba are for the most part absorbed by the Revolution. And if this does not occur to an even greater degree, it is because, in part, the organizational form of the state limits participation by all the population.

Collective property is not an abstraction. It is not a fact

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either that each person feels himself the proprietor, physically, of a machine or a bolt in some factory. The most concrete and also most general social reflection of collective property, of the suppression of private property as a means of exploitation of human work, is the feeling of equality. Again, this is not a relation with things—with property—but a relation between men.

This sentiment expresses itself in everything. In voluntary work, for example, the first condition for success is that the first to volunteer be the chiefs and leaders. When these really go—and this is the case, for example, with the Minister of Industry, Sunday after Sunday—the rest of the volunteers (who are not in any case ever the majority of the personnel in an office or enterprise) also go. When the leaders do not go, or when their attendance is purely demagogic, as occurs in cases when they go to be photographed for the papers and return home later in their automobiles, then general attendance drops; the people hold back and do not go either. Not because they are not ready to support the state in this way despite this or that leader, but as an indirect protest against a form of privilege or inequality.

In this area, protest against privilege takes on a rather clear form because the work is voluntary: whoever wants to go goes, and those who don't want to don't. But this same protest cannot help but show up in other fields—in daily work, for example. If the chiefs or leaders are enjoying obvious privileges, whatever they are, individual protest is immediately reflected in the workers' productivity. It is not an organized protest, nor does anyone decide to work less or worse. It is simply a normal reaction, and it occurs naturally and automatically: equality has been attacked, and so has the basis of collective property. The people do not have, at present, any direct or indirect means of correcting the situation, nor of actively showing their protest. The protest is expressed nevertheless, not because some one proposed it and despite exhortations and calls to work for the Revolution.

It is usual in situations like this that those who tend to defend the existence of privileges are the ones who accuse the

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workers or sections of workers of "having no revolutionary consciousness" and of "not working with enthusiasm."

In all this, too, two tendencies within the Revolution are clearly expressed. The tendency which affirms and accents the equalitarian aspects is tied to that which would extend the Revolution and which relies on world revolution. The tendency which justifies the inevitability of certain privileges during the present stage, due to the necessities of production, is tied to the tendency which supports peaceful coexistence and concentrates exclusively on economic construction. This is inevitable, for it is also a form of struggle between socialism and capitalism operating in the very heart of the Revolution; it takes place between the very forces of the Revolution itself, which are all anti-capitalist but which respond differently to the influence of capitalism, the world market, and their own situation in Cuban society. It is inevitable, for example, that all positions of relative privilege inspire a conservative attitude to help maintain such positions: an attitude of conservatism in politics and a policy of peaceful coexistence and transition to socialism. There are economic foundations at the top of the Cuban state for such an attitude. Among the masses there are absolutely none.

Collective property and collective interest in it and in production presupposes equality. When equality is systematically violated, it is the very base of the state which feels itself weakened, for the state tends to separate itself from the masses without ceasing to be their own state. Since all collective sentiment lives in and for the Revolution, it is extremely quick to defend equality.

When you get down to it, the Revolution has not given enormous material advantages to a great part of the Cuban people. It has brought them, on the other hand, problems and difficulties which did not exist before. But this is not the way revolutions are weighed. What matters is that the Revolution has given the people a new feeling which is summed up in equality. This sentiment is in part confidence in their own security now and in the future. Security is no longer identified with owning property or a savings account but with the existence and continuance of the socialist Revolution, collective property, and social organization. The increase in the birth rate in the midst

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of the uncertainty which the blockade, rationing, the threat of invasion and atomic bombing could be expected to inspire, is a reflection of this new security. Such a feeling arises also from the people's having seen their own forces in action, from having learned directly every day what millions all over Cuba are capable of doing, not only at Playa Giron but in daily organization and work. Their new social relations also contribute to their new sense of security.

The palpable, outward form of these sentiments and this security is equality for all. Human dignity takes this concrete form: proprietors-by-divine-right are suppressed and so are all to whom private property gave hereditary rights to live better than others, those who at the same time subjected society to a sort of collective alienation for the sake of property or of maintaining a given form of property.

For this reason, although private property cannot return through privileges—whether automobiles or apartments—there is a social reaction against privileges not only because simple justice is involved but also because the people unconsciously see in privileges the pressure of capitalism which lives on outside Cuba, and an attack against collective rights. This social vigilance is a defense of the very basis of the Revolution.

The Revolution and the workers' state unite the Cuban people. But within this unity the social revolution continues, not only about the forms for conducting the Revolution but also about the social and political relations between the state and the Revolution. The attitude toward equality is one of the touchstones of this struggle.

The word *compañero,* for example, is an expression of social fraternity and also of equality. This word sounds as fresh in Cuba as it can sound in a union in the midst of a great strike. In Cuba, however, it is everywhere: *compañero* is the functionary who greets you, the bus driver, the girl at a coffee shop, the sales girl at a retail store, or the man in the street whom you stop to ask the time. Everyone you talk to or talks to you is a *compañero.*

The word is not a formality. It underlines the social fraternity, the common objective, the struggle, and the single enemy which unites everyone. In Cuba, *compañero* and *cama-*

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rada (comrade) are currently used without any difference in meaning. But *camarada* has a more emphatic, warmer sound, depending on the particular case, and it gives a more intense accent to a relationship. It is not the old militant Communists who take to the use of *camarada* but, in the main, the militant new youth of the Revolution.

The use of *compañero* stands for equality in dealing with one another and, above all, for fraternity and community of goals, and this equality is observed and held dear by the people in all social situations. More important than living better or eating better—there is no eating *more*—is this major victory of the Revolution, this feeling of being equal to everyone. The defense of equality in behavior is one form of defense by the masses of their right to participate and decide in the Revolution: to decide their own destinies.

This equality is not a concession from on high; it is an imposition from below. The leadership, even when maintaining formal equality in their dealings, tend normally to adopt paternalistic attitudes; this is naturally inspired by their function in the state and in part by their political concepts.

But it is below where vigilance is maintained and equality upheld. From the top you can feel this permanent vigilance. It is interesting to see how many leaders and functionaries try to dissimulate or keep from becoming obvious any situation which differentiates them from the masses, because they feel themselves watched. From below a watch is kept over such matters as whether at some fiesta more than the usual amount is eaten, if someone changes cars without need, if he travels too much and without reason, if he has a mistress, or if he obviously tends in some area of his life to consolidate a privilege or keeps at a distance from the masses. We are talking about a spontaneous, unorganized collective judgment, which it is difficult to fault. For when the people see that some apparent privilege—a car or a house—is justified and needed for work for the Revolution, no one points it out or sees anything exceptional in it. But when an attempt is made to disguise a real privilege as a "work necessity," then it is invariably singled out and commented on even when the masses have, for the moment, no other means

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of stopping it than showing by their general criticism and pressure their unhappiness.

Now that the bourgeoisie and its economic power have been suppressed, all social life in Cuba tends to take on the purest aspects of a working-class district or mining area in the midst of struggle.

The aspiration toward equality as the basis for social functioning establishes a daily scale of values completely different from that of a capitalist country. The psychology of that comfortable middle class which keeps track of the latest automobile model or television set which the neighbors have bought in order to buy a better one no longer exists, for the Revolution has swept it away. It is no longer property by which one measures social importance or social values in the community. On the contrary, many who have such privileges try to disguise or hide them. All individual and social preoccupation with such possessive competitiveness turns to revolutionary collective goals. This fountain of human energy is inexhaustible, and it is still far from exploited to its full even by the Cuban leadership. Yet it is on this energy that the strength and solidity of the leadership is based when it faces its enemies; and the leaders demonstrate that they know and understand this, at least partly, when they defend equalitarian measures and attitudes.

For example, the disappearance of commercial advertising alone saves an enormous amount of energy in the minds of the community. No roads or streets or television sets or walls are any longer covered with pleas to buy this or that product. The enterprises which used to direct the attention and the social preoccupations of the petty bourgeoisie or the aristocracy of labor to buying their products have disappeared. If some hypothetical company wished to sell some hypothetical cars, it would not, given the social psychology of present-day Cuba, base its propaganda on the prestige and "distinction" of owning the latest luxury model, because the whole society is opposed to this.

One must insist that this is not solely determined by collective property. The Revolution, alive and in motion, is also responsible. In Czechoslovakia, where only collective property exists, the effects of material incentives and wide salary and social differences show up, among some sectors of the func-

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tionaries, in symbols of authority and prestige which are a direct reflection of capitalism—for example, in different models of automobiles. There, you do not have to disguise privileges or justify them; the state justifies them (although the Czech workers, for their part, have the same opinion of privileges and equality as the Cubans). In Cuba the living Revolution stops this and makes it possible for the sentiment of the masses to impose its own scale of values; its pressure does not allow consolidation of, or give official status to, forms of inequality, as if they were normal, acceptable, and desirable.

The Revolution, with its austerity of an army in the field, continues to be the dominant line of Cuban society. This line is imposed from below against those privilege-seeking tendencies which seek support in the Cuban state, in the influence of capitalism in the world, but above all in the organization of the state in the other socialist countries where a bureaucratic stratum, while defending the workers' regime, officially sanctions inequality within it.

The government of the United States has tried with the blockade to keep the development of the Cuban economy from influencing Latin America and, at the same time, to bring about the downfall of Fidel Castro's government or to encourage opposition to him. But the blockade has had two effects. On the one hand, it has set up a wall to prevent some Cuban influences from seeping through. This wall, however, works both ways, and it has, on the other hand, stopped capitalism from establishing a more solid alliance with the conservative, bureaucratic sectors of the Revolution—as it has to a certain extent been able to do in Yugoslavia and Poland—and from making its influence felt inside the Revolution itself.

For this reason a whole group of leading figures of North American imperialism recommends, in view of the failure of the economic blockade, establishing relations of "coexistence" with the island. This is not only simple acknowledgment of failure; it is also a search for more efficient methods of influencing the Revolution from inside.

Rationing and food scarcities, for example, bring great daily problems to the Cuban people, but they are far from weakening the Revolution. In a certain sense, they help solidify

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it internally. No one wants rationing nor defends it as desirable. Yet, once established as a necessity, rationing strengthens the most radical tendency of the Revolution, the tendency which wants equality; and it weakens the tendencies which are sensitive to capitalist influence.

Equality in eating is one more form of militant equalitarianism. The feeling that what is on one's table each day is on the table of all others and that what is missing for one is missing for everyone is a strong element working for internal unity. Only the Revolution has been able to achieve this result. It has achieved it at practically all levels, for an important state functionary's meals are subject to the same rationing as a worker's or an office employee's. If this is not absolutely so—there are also restaurants where you can pay to eat more than the average—it is, in any case, the dominant line.

The rationing card is not only a testimony to scarcity. The Revolution has converted it—something impossible with any other type of rationing—into a testimony to equality in difficulties. The people defend it as a guarantee of equality in distribution. That is why a slogan apparently as elementary as "Everyone eats the same," launched by Fidel Castro when rationing was established, had an immediate echo among the people and was later adopted as appropriate for the most different situations when privilege or inequality was being fought.

The same thing occurred with rationing of clothes and shoes. During 1962 and 1963, the scarcity of shoes was a great problem in Cuba. First, the existing industry was "reorganized" in such a way that hundreds of small shops were closed before the large mass-producing factories which were to replace them started functioning. Second, the quality of production fell, due either to poor workmanship or to a shortage of hides, for there was a decrease in quality and quantity of cattle production as a result of errors committed during the first stage of nationalization of great holdings. Finally, the wearing of shoes increased in the whole population. All these factors helped create an acute scarcity and required that strict rationing be instituted.

Certificates to buy shoes were distributed from the moment rationing was begun either through the unions or the

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Committees of Defense of the Revolution on the block or neighborhood level. In the case of the trade unions, they were distributed by the locals representing each enterprise. These distributing organizations discussed who needed shoes most, who could wait until the next turn, who until months later. Although there are union leaders who try to limit the function of local unions to questions like these, yet controls of this kind, imposed by necessity, are effective and reinforce the collective nature of the Revolution.

In the Committees of Defense which organized the distribution for housewives and other non-union persons, other qualifications were raised. In some cases, the leaders of the Committees tried to establish the principle that first, partisans of the Revolution should be served, and then the indifferent and those opposed. Protests arose from the rank-and-file members of the committees—who are, of course, revolutionaries—and they resolved that the distribution should be, as in the case of all provisions, on an equal basis, no matter what a person's stand on the Revolution: only with these methods could the Revolution influence neutrals and even adversaries. The stand of the rank and file was not a defense of counter-revolutionaries but a defense of equality.

Apartments are also distributed through the unions. As is known, anyone who leaves Cuba for exile must leave his apartment with all its furnishings to the state. The apartments later are distributed according to need. The unions have priority lists according to place of work, family size, present living quarters, and so on.

The scarcity of apartments is great, and so their distribution can serve to illustrate statistically how far the principle of equality is respected. In 1963, the government decided that 60 percent of apartments which were open would be distributed by the unions. The remaining 40 percent would be distributed by different state bodies—Armed Forces, Ministry of the Interior, Foreign Relations, etc.—for their needs, including their top functionaries. It is obvious that the state absorbed a disproportionate percentage for itself, given the scarcity of living space.

Apartments are a yardstick for measuring social privilege, not only in Cuba but in other socialist countries. The rich

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neighborhoods in Havana, like Miramar, which were abandoned by their ex-owners, are today used in great part to house scholarship students from the interior studying in the capital. This measure has prevented these neighborhoods from becoming converted into a center for a class of privileged functionaries, as has happened in other socialist countries with neighborhoods of the old bourgeoisie. In this way, equalitarianism in housing is greater in Cuba than elsewhere. It could be even greater, however, if the population had effective control through their own elective municipal and national bodies instead of having a generalized control through pressure and discussion.

To the degree that decisive intervention by the masses is limited in Cuba by the population's having no direct power, the state increases its independence from the base and tends to create and defend situations of privilege. These privileges, it must be insisted, are infinitely less than the privileges which money and property can buy in any capitalist country, or which executives serving property and capital enjoy; and, unlike the latter, they are not legal, nor are they defended by the constitution and the laws. On the contrary, they are illegal and arbitrary, and instead of being ostentatiously displayed have to be disguised by their beneficiaries. This completely different point of departure forbids comparison with capitalist countries. In the latter, privilege is the normal, accepted rule and society's functioning basis; whereas in Cuba it is a violation of the fundamental rule of equalitarianism which is the functioning basis of society in a workers' state. This gives the lie to all attempts to equate such contrary situations and to talk of a "new class" which is privileged.

It is within the framework of collective property and the developing Revolution that the dialectic of equality and privilege moves. In the last analysis, this is nothing but one more form of the internal dialectic by means of which the Cuban Revolution advances.

The Revolution has, of course, erased social differences. In Havana, Santiago, or anywhere else, everyone can go anywhere, the quality of dress is notably the same, and exclusive places do not exist. But beyond this a subtle difference develops between functionaries, those who "decide," and the common

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people, those who "don't decide." It is difficult to see outward signs of this difference, but you can feel it in the functionaries' manner of speaking and walking and the assurance with which they act.

In 1963, the Mountain Transport of the Revolution was inaugurated in Oriente. It consists of Soviet trucks which have been provided with seats and turned into buses; it has established a regular service in the farming regions of the Sierra where previously there was no transport, or at best insufficient and irregular lines. The red trucks of the Mountain Transport are always full of farmers, militia, workers, and office employees who have to move about the zone. They travel in a fraternal ambience which is popular and happy—a revolutionary "ambiente," as they say in Cuba.

Air travel between Havana and Santiago is provided by modern airplanes of Soviet manufacture which make the trip of a thousand kilometers in little more than an hour. The social composition—or, in any case, the social extraction—of those who travel by plane is not different from those who travel by Mountain Transport, except for the proportion of farmers. The functionaries, union and political leaders, and students who travel by plane are also of working-class or lower-middle-class origin, and today they occupy leading positions in the ministries and state bodies.

Nevertheless, going from Mountain Transport to the Havana-Santiago plane one notes a difference. Not so much in the way people dress or speak—in which they do differ to some extent—but in the general attitudes of the travelers. It is a subtle difference, but it is obvious to anyone who watches objectively. The plane passengers act with an assurance and "executive" attitude which those in the trucks do not show. They feel that they form part of the apparatus which decides; the others feel they form part of those who do not, except indirectly and from afar. This sole difference means that an enormous amount of energy, initiative, assurance in action are lost and left unused. They constitute an immense revolutionary force which the leaders of the Revolution have not yet utilized or utilize only to a small degree.

But—once more—the difference from the capitalist world

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is no longer subtle but violent. Take the Cuban plane on the Havana-Prague run, for example: inside it there exists a popular, communicative ambience in which everyone converses, as on any long trip on a second-class car of any train. The passengers sit around as if they were in a home they own. When you change to any line which joins Prague with the West, the difference is instantaneous and brutal. There the owners of the plane are "they," the ones who feel at ease are "they," conversations take place between gentlemen, and the plane is alien. It is at the opposite pole from that popular, fraternally warm ambience that the Cuban Revolution, like all fresh and alive revolutions, has brought to everything, even to its passenger planes.

The word "bureaucrat" has become current in Cuba. But not everyone gives it the same meaning. The leaders of the Revolution—particularly Che Guevara—have carried on campaigns against bureaucracy and have criticized bureaucrats. They give the term an administrative meaning which refers to unnecessary paper work and to functionaries who delay work, needlessly prolong proceedings, and make the functioning of the state machinery cumbersome. "Bureaucrat" in this case has a meaning not too different from that in capitalist states.

The popular expression instead gives the words "bureaucrat" and "bureaucracy" a wider meaning. "Bureaucrat" is the functionary who takes advantage of his job to enjoy privileges and who hangs on to his position with declarations of revolutionary faith and intimidating methods against criticism. This meaning, which is more precise from a Marxist point of view than the administrative meaning, has not been taught in any school or in any manual of Marxism circulating in Cuba (all translations of the latter are mass-produced in the Soviet Union), for in these schools and these manuals "no such animal exists." But the people have learned from their daily experience that bureaucracy and bureaucrats are not simply administrative facts but social and economic phenomena.

The term used is not always "bureaucrat." The workers also call them, for example, "the ones with the brief cases," because they always appear in a great hurry with a brief case under one arm in which one supposes are very important docu-

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ments; they look at the people who are working and leave in the same rush. "The ones with the brief cases" is an allusion to an unproductive social group who, among other things, have the privilege of deciding and leading in matters in which the masses should be taking the initiative. The hostility of this and other expressions is a form of social struggle inside the Revolution, a struggle for equality and for the right to decide.

It is clear that the bureaucracy develops common interests and, like all social groups, tries to defend them materially and politically. To this end, the argument for material incentives has been converted today into a theoretical justification of the existence of a privileged bureaucratic group, just as dependence on socialist incentives is an indirect expression of the resistance by the base against this group. But this, as we have seen, is only a limited aspect of the internal struggle, which is a social struggle that embraces all the problems of political and social life of Cuba, as it does, in different forms, in any other workers' state.

The dialectic of equality and internal social differentiation accompanies and meshes with the dialectic of world revolution and peaceful coexistence. And this dialectic, just as in the case of equality/inequality, is not subject to direct intervention by foreigners but is influenced by their indirect pressure.

The Cuban masses, at home, at work, in the street, criticize privilege, look for the means to combat it, maintain permanent vigilance, and constitute a perennial obstacle to the consolidation of a privileged stratum. At the same time, they unanimously and violently reject all criticism arising from anyone outside the Revolution or against the Revolution. For equality and privilege are internal problems of the Revolution. They have nothing to do and cannot be compared with what occurs in the capitalist world. Any attempt by opponents of the Revolution to utilize these criticisms is immediately rejected. And the people will intransigently defend against an enemy the same leader whom they criticize and reject at home. This is a traditional attitude of the working-class movement, applied on the level of a whole nation. That is why the counter-revolutionary radio stations in Miami have absolutely no echo in Cuba, not only because of the lies they broadcast but also because they come from the enemy.

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But all this does not annul the social struggle for equality inside Cuba. On the contrary, this struggle is one of the most alive elements of the Revolution and one of its domestic motors. Equality refers not only to standards of living or salaries. It also refers to the very essence of what a revolution is, in Cuba or anywhere else: the right of the people to decide their own destinies. The excessive influence of leaders, the impossibility of voicing criticisms in the press, the violent reaction of functionaries to revolutionary criticism, the lack of decisive elective bodies of the masses (committees, councils, soviets, which decide not this or that limited aspect of municipal matters but the basic problems of state policy)—all these are viewed as assaults on equality, on the equal right of all to give their opinions and to decide. And it is impossible to separate this concept of equality, equality in living conditions, from social behavior or any other aspect of social life.

The dialectic of equality is not isolated in Cuba. In reality it interweaves with the same dialectic in other socialist countries. The conditions are not the same in all, but their interdependence is close. The sectors which defend their privileges in the Soviet Union or in Poland are not at all interested in seeing that socialist democracy or social equality exist fully in Cuba today. Such an example would find fertile ground in the population of other socialist countries whose enthusiasm for Cuba is, in part, based on the image they see in it of an extension of socialism and, in part, on the extent of really fresh and lively socialist democracy in the Cuban Revolution.

But neither are the enemies of the Cuban Revolution interested in seeing this regime work. The widest participation by simple workers and farmers in the leadership of the Cuban state, free discussion, political life without any catches where it really counts, equality in all social life, would also have an enormous effect on the population of capitalist countries; even in the United States this would give the lie to the many untruths and calumnies about Cuba. On these issues the interests of the North American government and the Soviet Union coincide, though for different reasons.

This is why, as we have said before, the advocacy of "coexistence" and trade with Cuba is not only a confession of failure

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but also a search for new ways to influence the Revolution from inside. A leading sector of the capitalist world has come to the conclusion that the alternative is not to overthrow the government of Fidel Castro and re-establish capitalism but to neutralize the Revolution. And to do it, before the blockade becomes totally futile, they have to lean on the conservative internal forces inside the Revolution itself. This sector has acquired experience with "aid" to Yugoslavia and Poland, with the Sino-Soviet conflict, and in negotiations with the Soviet Union. This policy reveals the weakness of those who advocate it—an inability to do anything else—but it also counts on the support of weak aspects of the Revolution.

This sector of capitalism tries to influence and indirectly create conditions for the development of the conservative bureaucratic trend in the leadership of the Revolution. It follows with Cuba the line taken with Yugoslavia and Poland under different conditions. And the echo to its policy comes precisely from the Khrushchevite sector of the Cuban leadership, which in broad lines corresponds to the old leadership of the Cuban Communist Party plus a whole new stratum of functionaries. It cannot directly intervene in internal discussions of Cuban policies, but it does so indirectly; it tries to create conditions which give rise to illusions or which favor the conservative, bureaucratic tendency, whose line is to prevent participation in leadership by the Cuban masses and to maintain and increase the distance between them and the apparatus of the Cuban state. Thus, this tendency—by defending its own interests and bureaucratic positions—indirectly defends the influence and interests not only of the bureaucratic stratum of the Soviet Union but also of the enemies of the Cuban Revolution, the capitalist world.

This basic struggle is present tacitly and obliquely in all discussions and internal differences, and its outcome is decisive for the future of the Revolution. Whoever denies this dialectic and paints a picture of the Cuban Revolution without shadings or breaks is providing cover for the conservative forces, allying himself with pro-capitalist forces, and putting the brakes on the development of the Revolution. That is why the propagandistic writings of many so-called "friends of the Revolution," who

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refuse to discuss its truly rich dialectic or who deny it, is biased work. Their work goes against the Cuban Revolution for it prevents its partisans—the millions of workers, farmers, students, intellectuals who defend it throughout the world—from learning and intervening with their opinions and their strength to give stimulus to those sectors and trends which want to carry forward the Cuban Revolution and not to neutralize it or slow it down.

These problems are the central problems of this stage of the Cuban Revolution. The Cuban people, without being able to express them directly, not having the means or facilities, live them intensely in their daily lives and voice their opinions or their foresight or their desires in a thousand different and indirect ways. It is inevitable that sooner or later this process, which is linked to the world revolutionary process and the Sino-Soviet conflict, will manifest itself in direct political terms and will find a much clearer programmatic expression than it has up to now.

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CHAPTER 5

The Revolution Continues

Life has changed in Cuba. Or, rather, it continues to change. The Revolution goes on without interruption and without limits. It is part of the change in the life of humanity. Cuba is only one part, one stage, of the Revolution which encompasses the whole world.

This was the strength of Cuba in October, 1962, and it is its strength today. Cuba sustains itself not only through the decision of the Cuban people but even more because the forces of revolutionary humanity in the world defend in Cuba a part of its own destiny. And these forces grow from day to day, extend themselves, and are reflected in the decision and audacity of every Cuban.

In Cuba the masses feel that they have begun to govern their own lives. The Revolution also continues here: there is much to do, far to advance, many hangovers from the past and the capitalist world that still have to be eliminated. But each advance of the forces of revolution in other countries, and especially in Latin America, is directly reflected in the island and is a direct support to the continuance of the Revolution.

The Cuban Revolution has enormous national and international forces still unutilized. It has utilized and put into play only a small part of them, and yet with only this part has already accomplished so much.

The Chinese Revolution incorporated the principle of "investment of men." Without capital investment and with an excess of unemployed, the Chinese made a tremendous "human investment." They mobilized great masses with the primitive work instruments they possessed to work on great projects: dikes, land reclamation, roads, etc. Though they worked only for their bare food and clothing needs, these great masses raised

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their old standard of living of permanent hunger; and, at the same time, they created conditions for raising the collective standard of living to a higher level later on. The Chinese thus broke the vicious circle of underdevelopment, of the lack of capital which impeded the development of the economy, and of the lack of development which in its turn impeded the accumulation of capital.

The Chinese Revolution has been able to do this precisely because it *is* a revolution, because it mobilized not the arms of those millions but their minds and spirits and their collective will; it gave them a future and a conviction that for the first time they were doing for themselves and building their own future. Without a revolution this cannot be done.

The Cuban Revolution has made this same investment in another form. But it has invested only a small part of the capital it possesses. This capital is not only the arms and the collective decision of the Cuban people. It is the initiative, the inner energy, and the inventive, creative capacity of the masses. Only a part of this force is utilized: bureaucracy, privileges, rule from above in the unions, the lack of real means of exercising political expression and direct decision by the workers—all this wastes the rest or leaves it unused. Nevertheless, as all revolutions at their height demonstrate, the inner energy of the masses is aroused and increased to the extent that it is utilized. It is impossible to calculate what limits this energy can reach when freely channeled and expressed by the masses themselves in command of their own destinies.

The major investment and the major economic, social, and political force of the Revolution is the spirit of the masses who comprise it. This capital has a particular advantage: in a certain sense it has no limits and is inexhaustible. With a limited sector, the Cuban population, it has shown that it can utilize and channel the energy and revolutionary spirit of the great masses of Latin America, Europe, Africa, and Asia—and even of the United States. The great task of a revolutionary leadership is not simply to respond to pressure from the masses but to know how to organize and understand them and permit them to express themselves. If the Russian Revolution survived its first years, under conditions infinitely worse than

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Cuba's, it is because its leadership prepared itself in previous years for this work and showed itself capable of carrying it to its end, providing an example unequaled in history.

The so-called "material incentives" can serve to increase the intensity of individual work in one part of the population. But the world has seen that there are forces which can move with astonishing dynamism: the source of the Revolution's energy, and of the economy's and the whole population's, is the Revolution itself and the socialist consciousness which manifests itself through the Revolution. The reflection of this consciousness is the defense of equality. And equality, linked to the Revolution, has a collective economic value infinitely superior to any individual money incentive, for this is the kind of world in which the Cuban Revolution lives today.

The tendency which orients itself toward coexistence, material incentives, a pause in the Revolution for economic construction, separation from the Latin American Revolution in order not to provoke imperialist intervention, pacification—this tendency maintains that it is time to fortify conquered positions in order to move ahead later.

The tendency which orients itself toward the Revolution in Latin America, socialist consciousness, equalitarianism, extension of the Revolution, maintains that only by advancing the world Revolution can the Cuban Revolution itself advance, and that to cut it off from that fount of strength and energy is to weaken, isolate, and leave Cuba defenseless before her enemies.

Along these two great lines lie the alternatives of the Cuban Revolution and the struggle of its inner tendencies. As in the choice which arose in 1959 and 1960 between a democratic capitalist revolution and a socialist revolution, so once again the definitive decision will come from below; and whatever the immediate obstacles to be overcome, this decision is already in the process of being made.

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APPENDIX

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APPENDIX

The Centralization of Industry

Che Guevara, Minister of Industry, has given [December, 1962] a speech to the new administrators of enterprises which indicates that the inner polemic has reached certain conclusions and that Cuba—contrary to what is happening in other socialist countries—will continue giving pre-eminence to moral incentives and placing material incentives in a subordinate position.

Since the socialist system is a vast system of interdependencies, opting for the pre-eminence of moral incentives subsumes other decisions in the organization of the economy by the Ministry of Industry.

In the European socialist countries, including the Soviet Union, the "Titoist" trend toward economic decentralization has been gaining ground during the whole Khrushchev period, despite some ups and downs. As far as each factory is concerned, decentralization gives it greater autonomy to organize the factors of production. It is supposed that the better the organization the greater will be the utilization of the "hidden reserves" of each enterprise, the greater the yield, and the lower the cost of production. To encourage the enterprise to reduce costs, a substantial part of the difference between planning cost (by which prices are fixed) and actual cost remains at the disposition of the enterprise to be distributed as profit among the personnel. Part of it goes to individual and part to the common fund for housing and other collective improvements.

The system starts off with the supposition that it is precisely this interest in higher earnings and having a better home and raising one's standard of living that impels workers to produce more. In other words, material incentives are tied to developing autonomy of the enterprises and their management

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according to the criterion of profitability: the higher the profit the more successfully the enterprise is considered to be functioning.

In the Soviet Union, in the course of a debate started by Liberman's articles in *Pravda,* a group of economists insisted on the need to extend material incentives. One of the clearest statements was made by Academician Nemchinov: "The socialist economy has reached such a level of development that if the plan is not completed with a new and more perfect system of material incentives, existing resources and reserves cannot be mobilized and used with efficiency."

In Cuba, a Soviet economist, Sergei Shkurko, published an article in the October issue of *Cuba Socialista* defending the priority of material incentives.

But it may be that the experience of mobilization is what has most definitely convinced the Minister of Industry to come out and publicly defend the opposite position: to take a stand in favor of moral incentives. In an analysis made during the days of the mobilization of October by the management council of the Ministry of Industry, it was overwhelmingly proved that during the October-November mobilization, production plans were completely fulfilled and in many cases surpassed; and this occurred despite the fact that one third to one half of workers in a group of industries were in the trenches. During the mobilization, a number of problems in connection with low yields, absenteeism, etc., automatically disappeared. In summing up the experience, one enterprise director said: "It is the masses who have done everything in these moments of national emergency and have given impulse to tasks and stamped them with their dynamism"; and he pointed out that "there has been an increase in production and estimated capacities have turned out to be a 'joke,' something which is worthy of analysis."

Not a wage increase, but the threat of invasion and the general mobilization made the production indices take a leap.

"It is evident that material incentives exist during the period of the building of socialism," said Comandante Guevara. "The only thing is that we always give first place to the educational role, to deepening consciousness, to the call to duty as a primary

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measure. In addition to this call to duty, there are material incentives to mobilize the people."

But this call is tied to centralized leadership and not to administrative decentralization of enterprises. "Conscious that we could exercise through centralized administration effective control of industry down to its very administrative 'bolts,' we base ourselves on the ideological capacity of our leadership teams in order not to have to accord high priority to the expedient of direct material incentives."

To explain the decision for centralization, he also gave the following technical reasons: "In these days when technique advances so fast, technique itself imposes centralization. . . . In the future all will be automatic; in the very near future, the generators will go into operation and will only start generating current when the line itself automatically calls for it. In that way the capacity for individual decision by a small factory collective begins to disappear of itself and it becomes necessary for decisions to be centralized and complied with in accordance with rigid technical rules. . . . That is, the action of men in modern, centralized, automated industries should take place outside production. In the future, the will of men will express itself through political bodies which are being created and which will then determine the types of production that are needed for the country. . . . We can see that in the panorama of our already immediate future, in the great new producers of electricity which are being constructed, in the iron mills already announced, in the chemical plants we plan to build, and in the emphasis we are going to give to automation, the need for central control arises. It is obvious, of course, that all this will necessitate many changes, including political changes—which we do not mean to analyze here—changes that guarantee that production be directed centrally, though responding to the interests of the people; that is, it should be democratically decided upon within the possibilities of what must be done. Freedom, said Engels, is the recognition of necessity."

The centralized leadership, in its turn, is tied to budget calculations. This means that the control of income from an enterprise's production is not created by prices, by the profit

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that the enterprise obtains in the market, but by cost calculation and cost control determined by the enterprise's budget.

"We start from one base: that in all the productive ministries, in the whole socialist sector of production, the products that go from one factory to another, including from one organization to another, are not commodities; they are simply part of a product which is passing through different shops of a great factory and they will become commodities only when they reach the public, when they are individually acquired by someone and juridical possession of this product changes." On this basis, cost control takes over. And the reduction of costs, necessary to raise yields and income, results primarily from appeals to duty, to conscience, and much less to the advantages which each worker or each enterprise individually obtains in the market as a result of the cost reduction.

The reasons given by Che Guevara for selecting a system different from that adopted in other socialist countries (and against the opinions of most technical consultants from there) are partly geographic: "This is a small country, a country with good means of communication." And they are partly economic: "It is a country which has begun building socialism during a moment when the correlation of forces is turning in favor of the camp of socialism and when, practically speaking, there has already been established in the people's consciousness, as an irrefutable truth, the fact that history marches constantly toward new social forms. . . . Since consciousness has opened up in this way, we have insisted very much on moral incentives."

In both aspects, Che Guevara is drawing an implicit comparison with Soviet reality during the first years of its Revolution. In the first place, the USSR when it began building socialism and established through the New Economic Policy the market system and material incentives (which to this day have been maintained and extended) was an immense country with enormous economic backwardness, bad communications, and great economic disproportion from one region to another; secondly, it was an isolated country, razed by seven years of war and surrounded by capitalism; before expanding, the new system had to think first of surviving.

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Nevertheless, these differences do not quite explain why in the Soviet Union (or Czechoslovakia) the dominant trend among economists is to extend material incentives, particularly since it is now a developed country with good communications and the world correlation of forces should make itself more vigorously felt in the people's consciousness. Also, an intense discussion has arisen there between partisans of centralization and decentralization in which the latter include the majority of the country's leading economists.

To raise this question is to discover that, except for geographic or economic differences (which may have some importance), the Cuban leadership has a different concept of the road of development toward socialism.

A persistent trend toward an equalitarian concept of society during transition to socialism is always at the base of the Cuban leaders' thinking. The Soviet leaders, on the contrary, have always underlined and theorized about the positive role that unequal income plays in questions of incentives.

In the same way, the Cuban leaders are inclined to maintain the greatest possible equality between conditions of work and pay in the different enterprises, whereas decentralized socialist economies tend to create a certain competition between the enterprises or at least to establish differences between those which produce at different costs. This could lead, as the Chinese charge in the case of Yugoslavia, to "privileged" enterprises and underprivileged ones, a difference which often depends not on individual effort but on many other factors (installations, geographic location, position in the market, commercial combinations, etc.).

But if a socialist economy is a vast system of interdependencies, so is the system of socialist countries as a whole. Theoretically, each one follows its own way to socialism. In fact, apart from inevitable differences based on geographic and national characteristics, there are others which arise from different concepts about fundamental problems of socialism in this epoch. These concepts, even when they appear to be differences about building socialism, also assimilate other differences from the international situation: the roads to socialist

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revolution in capitalist countries, and the relations among socialist countries. It is possible to reconstruct from one particular position on a certain problem of economic organization the whole array of its partisans' ideas and to establish affinities with other systems.

In the present Moscow-Peking polemic, in which Havana has not publicly taken part (and it would be difficult for it to do so in the immediate future), the Cuban position appears to lean more toward China. The Cuban stand on the relation between moral and material incentives in the economy is also not far from that of the Chinese.

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(*continued from inside front cover*)

course of events. For those of us who believe that in the final analysis it is people and not leaders who make history, this is evidently a crucially important subject. We know of no other author who has treated it as deeply and perceptively as Adolfo Gilly. Therein lies the importance of his work.

Subscribers in the New York City area may be wondering why the Monthly Review Associates annual appeal letter did not list the usual free admission to the MRA lecture series among the benefits of membership in the Associates. The reason is that there will be no MRA lecture series this year. When the Associates was set up more than a decade ago, it was almost alone in providing a forum for lecturers on the Left. Today, since many other organizations are presenting left-wing speakers, we have decided to leave the field to the others and concentrate on the books project described in the Associates appeal letter. A note from a reader in Seattle, accompanying an order for three MR Press books, reinforces our decision to spend our own energies on what we can do best: "I trust you will continue to publish high quality books for discriminating readers as you have done for so many years. The work of your Press and your magazine is an invaluable contribution to the dissemination of truth and the extension of genuine democracy."

The "high quality" of MR Press book, *Politics and Law in South Africa,* by Julius Lewin, is noted in the June 1964 number of *Africa Report* in these words: "These essays certainly rank among the finest ever written on the South African scene, for they are remarkable in their clarity, incisiveness, and prescience. . . . In some ways, this slim volume does for South African politics what Walter Bagehot's *English Constitution* did for British politics roughly a century ago."

In the London *Tribune* of July 17, 1964, there is another accolade for another MR Press book, *The Socialist Register 1964*: "If the succeeding volumes keep up the standard of the 1964 one, the series will be of permanent value to all Socialists, and indeed to anyone concerned with politics. . . . *The Socialist Register* is an excellent way of keeping up to date with the political situation in many countries." We have no doubt that future volumes in the series will not only maintain the 1964 standard but surpass it.

And in the *Library Journal* of September 1, 1964, the reviewer says of MR Press book, *Marxism of Our Time,* by Gilles Martinet: "For a good example of the change and progress in pro-Marxian lore, this book fills the bill nicely."

In our September Notes we reported that *The Alienation of Modern Man* by Fritz Pappenheim had sold over 60,000 copies in the Japanese translation. Just before his untimely death on July 31, Fritz received a letter from the publisher informing him that the sales of the book will "cross the line of 100,000 by the end of this year or early next year.

On page 284 of Andrew Gunder Frank's article "On the Mechanisms of Imperialism: the Case of Brazil" in last month's issue, the author's *Nation* article "Brazil in Perspective," which appeared in that magazine's issue of April 27, 1964, is wrongly cited. That article dealt with the *coup d'état* of April 1st; whereas Dr. Frank's article on U.S.-Brazilian economic relations entitled "Brazil: Exploitation or Aid?" to which reference should have been made, appeared in *The Nation* of November 16, 1963. While we are on the subject, we strongly recommend both articles to MR readers.

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